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NEW YORK

President: Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112 *(continued)*

INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETINGS TO EXAMINE THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AGAINST THE ILLICIT PRODUCTION, SALE, DEMAND, TRAFFIC AND DISTRIBUTION OF NARCOTICS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/48/L.12

The PRESIDENT: The first speaker is Ms. Wilma Zafra Turbay, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, on whom I now call.

Ms. ZAFRA TURBAY (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Colombia attaches the greatest importance to these high-level plenary meetings on international drug control, which are being held within the framework of the United Nations General Assembly. We are pleased to have actively promoted this event at precisely the time when interest in the subject appeared to be declining.

Undoubtedly, this is the proper platform for the generation of effective and decisive responses from the international community to the implacable challenge that the illicit traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances represents.

Drug trafficking has acquired new dimensions and ever more sophisticated mechanisms, demanding a clear and effective response from all States in order that we may together eradicate its harmful effects on world society.

Colombia views with concern the indications of increased illicit consumption and production of and trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances. We are also alarmed by the growing incidence of drug-related crimes, such as narco-terrorism, arms and explosives trafficking, the diversion of precursor chemicals and money laundering.

Despite the significant efforts of the international community, we can say - calmly, but with concern - that drugs are as great a problem as ever; the problem is made worse by the indolence of some and the inadequate application of the strategies to which we have all committed ourselves at the international level.

My country has made a special effort to strengthen its judicial system through institutional reform, including new investigative mechanisms and indictment procedures. Today we have more robust institutions that facilitate the strict application of justice within the framework of the State's modernization process.

At the international level, Colombia has participated actively in the strengthening of cooperation. We have made available to the international community such areas and means as we can, as well as the best of our human, financial and technical resources, in order to achieve a greater exchange of information and experience. In this context, I am pleased to give the Assembly confirmation of the Colombian Congress's approval in August of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in

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Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in Vienna in 1988.

The scope of drug-related phenomena is so vast that international instruments alone are not enough to overcome this scourge. Each State must adopt and implement them internally, showing genuine commitment. The outcome of this struggle will remain in doubt as long as there is tolerance for such things as the free trade in and diversion of chemical precursors; the existence of tax and financial havens for laundering illegal profits; and arms and explosives trafficking linked to drugs.

In order to dismantle the financial apparatus of the criminal organizations involved, international action must be geared towards enabling financial systems and enforcement agencies swiftly to exchange information on suspicious transactions.

Although only a small amount of illicit capital enters the Colombian economy, measures have been implemented to detect money laundering. Thanks to the joint initiative of the private sector and the State security and investigative bodies, the detection of money laundering has been made easier, both inside and outside the country, in collaboration with other Governments.

There is a clear link between illicit trafficking in arms and explosives and the violence associated with drug trafficking. The failure to control the sale and export of arms in some countries, in addition to the enormous resources of the criminal organizations, has made this one of the most profitable businesses.

The environmental degradation caused by illegal cultivation, through the indiscriminate destruction of forests, continues to cause irreparable damage to the Andean and tropical ecosystems. Furthermore, the erosion caused by this cultivation has a drastic effect on water resources, a subject of vital importance on the international agenda.

I must also mention the grave problem of the use and consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances. My country views with particular concern the sustained rise in demand throughout the world. The international community must promote an overall evaluation of demand-control and demand-prevention policies in order to develop renewed strategies. Active cooperation between States, non-governmental organizations and private sector groups is indispensable for achieving the objectives of preventing drug addiction and treating and rehabilitating addicts.

We must reinforce the legal and financial mechanisms so that international cooperation will be more efficient in its various spheres of action. These include cooperation between judiciaries to exchange information and evidence to expedite the indictment and trial of drug-traffickers; the harmonization of legislation so that there will be efficient action in matters of control and prevention and a real decrease in criminality; and technical cooperation to make possible the dissemination and standardization of strategies and mechanisms aimed at preventing and curbing such activities.

I suggest to the Assembly that the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs should meet at the highest level to make the necessary evaluations; adopt recommendations and specific measures; and design new strategies to bring greater efficiency to the attainment of the proposed goals and encourage States to show the firmest, clearest political will to implement the proposed actions.

Colombia is pleased to announce that in order to promote research in this field and put at the service of countries affected by this curse the experience Colombia has acquired over recent years, the creation of a Centre for International Studies and Research on Drug Trafficking, where we hope, with other interested countries, to enhance knowledge and improve strategies for combating this sinister scourge of humanity.

I should like to take advantage of this important occasion to express the Colombian Government's recognition of the work being done by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), which is the coordinating body for international cooperation within the United Nations system. However, we also want to emphasize the importance of endowing that Programme with the resources necessary to ensure its timely and effective operation. The current level of its budget allows only for the carrying out of pilot programmes in certain areas and countries, whereas the problem calls for universal attention.

Once again, in this battle in which we are all engaged we exhort all Governments to express their political will, realistically and with tangible commitment. What is at stake is the well-being and survival of mankind. We must devote ourselves with determination to building a society founded on the human being as a rational, creative and feeling entity who seeks to approach the new millennium in peace and harmony.

Our hopes and the future of our children depend on the responsibility with which we act in the present.

The PRESIDENT: I now call upon the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. MIN (**Myanmar**): I should like to begin by expressing the satisfaction of the delegation of Myanmar at seeing you, Sir, preside over the high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly on drug-abuse control. In your opening address to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session you rightly emphasized the need for a collective vision to turn individual dreams into reality. In no other human endeavour is there a more compelling need for such vision than in our efforts to rid the world of the scourge of illicit drugs.

In the past two decades the use of illicit drugs has spread at an alarming rate, affecting the individual, the family, the community and society in nations around the globe. The illicit production, distribution and consumption of drugs have become a most serious problem, one that represents a global challenge requiring a global response. It is therefore encouraging to note that there is today a growing awareness in the international community of the need to take a firm stand to overcome the threat posed to mankind by the drug problem. The holding of these high-level plenary meetings is a manifestation of that awareness and the leadership role that the United Nations plays in the field of drug-abuse control. My delegation is confident that these meetings will give us an opportunity to evaluate the implementation of the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in 1990 as well as to enhance international cooperation.

Myanmar believes that concerted action will be required at the international and national levels to meet the challenge posed by illicit drugs. In this regard, Myanmar has been shouldering its responsibilities both at home and abroad. In parallel with the anti-narcotics campaigns being carried out within the country, we have also been participating actively in international forums dealing with illicit drugs, from the special session of the General Assembly devoted to narcotic drugs to the World Ministerial Summit to Reduce Demand for Drugs and to Combat the Cocaine Threat. As earnest of our commitment, we acceded to the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances in June 1991. Subsequently, in January 1993, the Myanmar Government enacted the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Law, which harmonizes its statutes with the major international treaties to which it is a party. It also eliminates loopholes in earlier statutes with respect to corruption, asset seizure and conspiracy.

In keeping with the 1990 Global Programme of Action, Myanmar has been cooperating with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and neighbouring countries to expand activities aimed at reducing the supply of illicit drugs and eventually eliminating opium cultivation in the country completely. In June 1992 the Myanmar Government took the initiative of signing agreements with the People's Republic of China and the UNDCP, as well as with Thailand and the UNDCP, in order to collaborate in addressing the problems of illicit production, trafficking and abuse. The Governments of Myanmar and Laos have also agreed to cooperate in this regard. As delegations are aware, the Governments of Myanmar, China, Laos and Thailand yesterday signed here in New York a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNDCP. Myanmar also signed a drug-control agreement with India in April of this year and aims to work out a similar agreement with Bangladesh.

We are confident that those cooperative efforts at the subregional level will result, not only in the effective elimination of opium cultivation and trafficking in narcotic drugs and chemicals used in the refining of heroin and the production of other illicit drugs, but also in reducing the demand for local consumption and concurrently addressing the problem of HIV-AIDS infection associated with intravenous drug abuse.

Myanmar has been unrelenting in its war against the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs since it regained its independence in 1948. In recent years efforts have been stepped up, and my Government has been implementing a nation-wide drug-suppression programme. We realize that the illicit-drug problem is complex and that it must be addressed comprehensively. Accordingly, our national programme is multifaceted and covers the whole gamut of drug-control activities, from law enforcement and education to crop substitution and medical treatment.

In the past it has been our strategy to focus mainly on the destruction of poppy fields, sometimes carried out manually and at other times by aerial spraying of herbicides. While such efforts have had some success in addressing production and trafficking problems, the practice of shifting cultivation and drug production along and across border areas, coupled with the rough terrain and mountainous topography, makes effective control difficult, with the result that the overall impact of these measures has been limited. The situation has been aggravated by the presence of heavily armed drug-trafficking groups in the drug-producing border areas.

With the advent of the State Law and Order Restoration Council, a new approach was adopted. Recognizing that the drug problem cannot be divorced from the problem of poverty, my Government launched, in 1989, a new programme to raise the living standards of the national races in the border regions in order to narrow the gap between the city dweller and the rural folk. The new

approach is aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the local populace by raising their awareness of the insidious effects of drug abuse and the human misery and suffering that opium and other illicit drugs leave in their wake. The cornerstone of the new approach is the provision of alternative sources of income to the farmers who depend entirely on the cultivation of the opium poppy for their livelihood. Accordingly, emphasis is now being placed on programmes designed to generate alternative incomes, such as crop substitution, livestock breeding, trade promotion and mineral exploration.

In parallel with its anti-narcotic-drug programmes, the Government has been implementing since March 1989, on a priority basis, a programme for the development of border areas and national races. A separate Ministry was established in 1992 to ensure the development of the border areas and to eradicate poppy cultivation.

The new approach of the Myanmar Government is in keeping with the strategy recommended by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action. It provides for, among other things, the stimulation of rural development in opium-producing areas as another key element of the opium-elimination strategy. As stated in the report, one common feature of the producing areas is that they are relatively remote, mountainous and not well integrated into the mainstream of national economic and social development. The aim of the rural development programmes is to reduce the isolation of such communities in those areas by improving the transport and communication infrastructure and social services, as well as by introducing alternative crops for their livelihood. The Myanmar Government has been implementing just such a programme, with the objective of improving the transport and communication infrastructure in the Shan, Kachin, Rakhine, Chin and Kayah states and in the Sagaing division, which are the constituent units of the Union of Myanmar bordering on neighbouring countries.

The two parallel programmes of my Government - one on narcotic drugs and the other on development - complement each other. Significant results have been achieved. As a result of the constructive measures taken by the authorities, and reflecting their complete trust and confidence in the policy of national reconciliation espoused by the State Law and Order Restoration Council and in its goodwill and sincerity, 10 armed groups have now returned to the legal fold. They are now cooperating with the Government in promoting peace and prosperity in their respective regions.

Representatives of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and other visitors to Myanmar have been given the opportunity to acquire firsthand knowledge of the illicit-drug problem in the country. United States Congressman Charles B. Rangel, Chairman of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, and a number of his colleagues from both the United States Senate and House who visited Myanmar in the course of the current year saw for themselves recent Myanmar Government achievements in the field of narcotics control. I have already mentioned some of those achievements, but, given their significance, allow me to repeat them.

Myanmar signed drug-control agreements with China and UNDCP, and also with Thailand and UNDCP, in 1992. In April 1993, Myanmar signed a drug-control agreement with India and has already agreed to sign one with Laos. Yesterday, here in New York, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Governments of Myanmar, China, Laos and Thailand and UNDCP. The main objectives of the agreement are to eliminate opium-poppy cultivation through economic-and-social-development programmes, eliminate trafficking in narcotic drugs and chemicals used in refining heroin, and reduce the demand for and local consumption of narcotic drugs.

In cooperation with international partners, the Myanmar Government arrested 12 alleged traffickers earlier this year on a conspiracy charge under its new statute. The Government enacted a new drug law in January 1993 to harmonize its statutes with the major international treaties to which it is a party. Drug task forces in the country have been increased from 5 in 1988 to 16 in 1992. Additional task forces will be formed as required. Statistics for 1992 show that seizures of heroin by the authorities rose by nearly 50 per cent while opium seizures rose by more than 35 per cent over the previous year's totals. Seizures of heroin are nearly the same as those reported from Thailand, notwithstanding the fact that the United States has placed Myanmar on the list of countries decertified as a non-cooperating country in the fight against narcotics trafficking.

The Myanmar Government and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) have carried out an opium-yield study based on samples taken from representative areas of the country. This is the first study of its kind in the country. Regarding cooperation between the Myanmar authorities and the United States DEA, I should here like to quote the following passage from the report of the head of the DEA Country Office in Yangon:

> "During the entire period of DEA presence in Myanmar, there is not a single instance in which a cooperative DEA/Government of Myanmar investigation has been compromised. There are very

few countries in which DEA agents are assigned that can make such a claim".

The Myanmar authorities have responded fully to DEA requests for investigative assistance. In this regard, the same official states:

> "In some instances, the Government of Myanmar provided more information than was actually requested in the first place".

The endeavours of the Government of Myanmar to develop border areas are registering significant progress. One manifestation of such progress is the return to the legal fold this month of the Kachin Independence Organization, one of the largest armed groups in the country. Significantly, representatives of the Kachin nationals stated at a press conference held at United Nations Headquarters on 14 October that they are resolved to end poppy cultivation in their state by 1995.

From what I have stated, it should be quite evident that the Myanmar Government has taken serious measures to address the problem of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. A head start has been made. However, we are aware that only through concerted international efforts can the world overcome the challenge posed by illicit drugs. The untold suffering and misery that drug addiction wreaks upon our societies and nations demand that we work together to put an end to drug abuse and illicit trafficking.

The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I call on the representative of Venezuela

Mr. TAYLHARDAT (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) represents the concerted efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to combat the production, sale, demand for, traffic in and illicit distribution of drugs and psychotropic substances.

It will be possible to appreciate the full scope and value of the global strategy of international action, which is given concrete form in the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, only with the passing of time and to the extent that all States incorporate in their legislation and internal policies the general guidelines laid down in the instruments adopted in recent years. I refer in particular to the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities of 1987 and to the Global Programme of Action of 1990. Unquestionably, the full implementation of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was initiated by my country, is a central element of this action.

Venezuela approves of the important work being done by the United Nations, and particularly by the Executive Director of the UNDCP, Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, in the fight against drugs.

It is a fact that the harmful effects generated and propagated by the consumption of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and related activities have heightened social and economic problems and increased violence within many of our countries.

Our awareness of the fact that, far from improving, this situation is growing more serious requires us to continue examining its causes and its effects on the socio-economic order of our peoples so that we may take the most appropriate corrective measures.

The geographical situation of Venezuela - its advantageous position on the sea, extensive border areas and means of communication - continually exposes it to the risk of being used by drug trafficking organizations as a transit country.

Transit operations are not confined to the use of our territory as a connecting point in international drug traffic. Because of the capacity of drug traffickers for offence, transit operations also undermine border security, the integrity of foreign trade, the stability of the financial system, the civic and moral integrity of our officials and citizens and our public health, as well as national sovereignty in its fullest context.

The so-called transit countries are not only used for the transport of illegal drugs; they are also used in the transport of the chemicals employed in the clandestine manufacture of drugs and in the transfer of the capital generated by such activities, which, once it is rendered legitimate, is returned to the State where the criminal organization is based.

In spite of the dangerous implications of this, the special situation of transit countries has been an aspect of the general problem of drug trafficking that is rarely considered by the international community. To ensure a more effective worldwide struggle against drug trafficking, we must analyse and examine in depth the situation of these countries and the turmoil they experience as a result of the negative impact of the drug problem on their social and economic structures.

For these reasons, Venezuela believes that the problems of transit countries must be viewed in a broader context. We are pleased that the draft resolution we will be adopting at the end of this debate takes this concern into account.

Venezuela's awareness of its position has prompted us to extend our efforts at prevention, control, supervision, investigation and full international cooperation to the multiple phases of international drug traffic in transit, and to associate the problem with security and national defence.

Internal drug trafficking operations cannot be considered entirely independently of the situation generated by transit traffic. The largest drug seizures continue to be made from operations on international drug routes. This does not allow us to draw any conclusions about the internal situation, particularly not if we take into account that the various operations taking part in the transit process do not always correspond to the levels of criminal organization based within the territory. These operations may be dictated by attempts to avoid repressive activities in a given region.

As a result of intensified vigilance along our borders, investigations of certain commercial activities in neighbouring States and of the transit of persons, among other actions carried out by the police, have made it possible to intercept certain international connections which sought to use our territory to transfer illegal capital outside of the country.

This investigation, which is being carried out now and is still at a confidential stage, is an important precedent for the establishment of the crime which doctrine and the new Venezuelan law identify as the legitimation of capital, and for the definition of a more precise outline of illegal drug transit operations.

On the basis of our past experience, we believe it important that, within the activities of prevention and community mobilization, a place be made for the re-education of drug users who are being rehabilitated, with a view to increasing their job skills as an effective means of reducing the demand for illicit drugs.

The attraction of trafficking in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances lies in the possibility of obtaining large profits in a short amount of time. The two columns on which this business is founded are supply and demand, which are so closely related that it is almost impossible to consider the problem and its consequences without taking the importance of both into account.

In recent years, national and international actions have focused primarily on combating supply. This has, to some extent, diverted attention away from effective policies for putting an end to illicit demand. In numerous international meetings and forums, the growth of that essential element of the problem has been noted, as well as the preference of traffickers for importing and distributing drugs in those places where their market value is highest.

This disturbing picture reminds us of the need to promote large-scale strategies to prevent the clandestine movement of drugs in those States where there is a great demand for illegal drugs. A shrinkage of the market would be effective, since without profitable places to sell the product there would be no incentive to produce and cultivate it. At the same time, this would alleviate the situation of the transit countries.

This key aspect of the problem demands that we take into account paragraph 4 of article 14 of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the Vienna Convention) and give priority to those programmes aimed at eliminating or reducing illicit demand.

To prevent the diversion towards unlawful uses of chemicals and precursors legally used by industry, Venezuela has, since 1985, been implementing an administrative regime of supervision and control of the commercial operations which import and export these products.

The recent reform of the special drug law of 1984 was approved by the Venezuelan legislature to improve and expand the earlier regime, adapting it to the stipulations of the 1988 Vienna Convention and to the guidelines contained in the model law drawn up by the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission and approved by the Organization of American States. In accordance with this legislative reform, import and export operations must be registered and must obtain a special permit. The procedure by which these authorizations are granted is subject to the guidelines set out in the Vienna Convention.

To ensure the effectiveness of the import control established by the country, exporters must, in turn, exercise greater vigilance and supervision over their exports and must also speed up the system of exchange of information on commercial operations involving these products.

In general, we would consider the expansion of the voluntary system of estimating quantities required for industrial use - similar to the system established for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances - a significant stride forward in drug-abuse control.

The drug problem should not be considered solely from the individual points of view of producer, transit, consumer or money-laundering countries nor yet exclusively in a global or universal way. A regional

orientation is also required, which would take advantage of the capacity for cooperation among the countries of a given region affected by this scourge and of the potential for coordination in defining joint policies and actions.

One step in this direction could be, for example, for the countries of the American continent and the Caribbean to agree on the objective of converting the region into a drug-free zone by the first decade of the next century. We realize that this is an ambitious objective, but if all those concerned - producer, consumer, transit and money-laundering countries - were to define a joint plan, even if we had not achieved the objective by the date mentioned, at least we would have made considerable progress by developing a concerted and coordinated programme to combat the problem of drugs in all its dimensions. Similar initiatives in other regions of the world would also be beneficial.

My country is firmly convinced of the essential role of international cooperation in the fight against the drug problem. Venezuela resolutely supports all initiatives and actions the international community has undertaken along these lines.

The PRESIDENT: Before calling on the next speaker in the debate, I should like to inform the Assembly that, in view of the large number of Member States whose names are still inscribed on the list of speakers, the plenary meeting this afternoon will go beyond 6 p.m., until at least 7.30 p.m., as an extraordinary measure and thanks to additional conference services made available to these high-level meetings. Once again I appeal to delegations to try to stick to the limits prescribed.

The General Assembly will continue and conclude the debate on this item tomorrow afternoon.

I now call on Mr. Zainuddin Abdul Bahari, Director of the Anti-Drug Task Force of Malaysia.

Mr. BAHARI (Malaysia): Our meetings here mark yet again the international community's common resolve to address collectively the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. This series of meetings is significant and timely as the war against this scourge is far from over. According to reports from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the International Narcotic Control Board (INCB), the situation remains grim and we are fighting losing battles in certain regions. Our meetings therefore provide the opportunity to take stock of these developments and to dedicate ourselves to the onerous tasks ahead of all of us. To achieve decisive results, efforts to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking require a comprehensive, continuous, balanced and multidisciplinary approach.

My delegation shares the belief that the status of international cooperation to combat drug abuse and illicit trafficking needs to be re-evaluated. The profusion of multilayered, interrelated issues and participants has made the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking an extremely difficult and complex undertaking. We need to better coordinate our work in order not to lose sight of our objectives, priorities and strategies while maintaining our cohesiveness in fighting this menace. In this regard, the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control and the Global Programme of Action should be continuously reviewed and updated.

It is imperative that the United Nations take the lead role in rationalizing the work to avoid duplication and ensuring coordination and complementarity. The report of the Secretary- General on "Implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control" (A/48/329) mentions only a few agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Obviously other agencies need to take an active part in this fight.

UNDCP was formed to fulfil the need to address the drug menace collectively, with the United Nations playing a central role of coordination. In playing that role, the United Nations must make its activities consistent with and complementary to the efforts and commitments of national Governments. The UNDCP should endeavour to cooperate with, and optimize the activities and actions of, States rather than doing the job for them. The UNDCP should also take its guidance from the CND, the main policy-making body. The CND itself, which has been expanded, should now be more active and effective.

The development of national master plans to implement the Global Programme of Action is a good starting point for international cooperation in this area. To be effective, the Programme should be implemented in tandem with national policies and strategies. Malaysia commends the UNDCP for its initiatives at regional and subregional levels to assist nations in the implementation of the Programme, particularly in the development of national master plans. Malaysia developed a sectoral master plan for anti-narcotics measures as early as 1985, and we reiterate our readiness to render the necessary assistance to the UNDCP in formulating strategies in developing such master plans.

In conjunction with international and national strategies, societies must be sufficiently well informed and sensitized so that they can respond positively to these initiatives. Malaysia supports the thrust of the approach envisaged by the Global Programme of Action for an international strategy encompassing the reduction of illicit supply of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; the curb on demand through prevention of drug addiction and treatment; rehabilitation and social reintegration of addicts; the suppression of illicit manufacture of and trafficking in drugs; and the regulation of the international market in drugs for medical and scientific purposes.

Prevention is a key element in the fight against drug abuse. The Secretary-General's report mentions two important principles relating to demand reduction. The first principle involves the question of a demand-reduction programme which requires the involvement of all sectors of society and the international community. The second principle focuses on specific vulnerable target groups. Sufficient and relevant legislation must be enacted and adequate resources must be allocated as prerequisites to any sustainable implementation of demand-reduction programmes.

Malaysia's own experience confirms that drug-demand reduction measures have an important role in the war against the scourge of drugs abuse and illicit trafficking. We are also convinced that for these measures to be effective the commitment of national Governments is required. The provision of legislation for the screening of suspected drug addicts enables us to estimate the magnitude of the drug-abuse problem. This provides a sound basis for the formulation of demand-reduction strategies. It is equally important that confirmed drug addicts be subjected to mandatory treatment and rehabilitation. Compulsory and effective treatment can make a substantial contribution to reducing the demand for illicit drugs.

These measures demand substantial financial allocations, which may be beyond the financial capability of many countries. Our review should therefore look into alternative financing for these activities, particularly the question of the involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Institutionalizing collaborative efforts in demand reduction at the regional levels is important as well. Malaysia strongly believes that the establishment of a mechanism to deal with demand-reduction issues is long overdue. In this connection, it is recommended that the UNDCP establish regional meetings structured along the lines of the Meetings of the Heads of National Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA).

The recent Asian HONLEA meeting in Seoul brought to the fore a disturbing observation. There appears to be a decline in the focus on drug issues among national Governments. It is ironic that this should be so, particularly in view of the growing emergence of drug-related problems such as the transmission of the HIV virus, AIDS, and money laundering. The international community should show greater commitment to and determination in enforcing measures to control and prevent the drug problem.

The eradication of illicit drug production is another area requiring early international action, given the general acceptance of the linkage between poverty and drug production. The issue is not as simple as that relating to crop substitution, as it involves the question of social development, cultural particularity and the security of the poor peasants who are forced to cultivate coca or opium. Until and unless the enormous scale and implications of this problem are appreciated, all well-intended measures will prove to be ineffective.

The cornerstone of the United Nations effort to eradicate drug production should be based on providing a practical alternative means of subsistence to drug growers. One interesting proposal by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) calls for debt swap, whereby part of the official debt payment of heavily indebted countries would be set aside for alternative development activities. In welcoming this proposal, we wish to emphasize the need for clear guidelines to ensure that the objectives are met.

The suppression of illicit drug trafficking is another relevant aspect in the fight against drug abuse. Unfortunately, over the years, there has been an overemphasis on and an incquitable allocation of resources to this particular aspect. Most countries in their initial efforts focused primarily on law enforcement and interdiction. The United Nations itself has been and remains influenced by this line of thought, which has manifested itself in its overemphasis on drug-law-enforcement measures. This has perhaps been inevitable because of the initial perception that if the flow of drugs can be stopped, the drug problem can be eradicated. The truth, however, is that suppression of drug trafficking and distribution is not the panacea to the drug problem. Today, no country can claim to have succeeded in reducing the inflow of drugs. There has been no reduction in the illicit production, manufacture and consumption of and trafficking in drugs. Indeed, on the contrary, there has been an increase in the production of drugs. There is thus a need for a balanced and equitable approach by UNDCP in its programmes and activities, without veering predominantly towards law enforcement.

We agree with the observation in the reports of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and UNDCP on the need for member countries to show their commitment to the fight against drug abuse by ratifying and acceding to the three major international instruments on this matter: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Participation will ease national control efforts and enable countries to participate in international activities. This is vital in the case of the newly independent countries, whose non-participation in these instruments will make them targets for drug traffickers. Malaysia ratified the 1988 Convention early this year.

National laws need to be updated in compliance with international drug treaties. It goes without saying that countries should have an adequate legal framework to deal with the drug problem because the lack of basic drug laws would impede international cooperation. This is particularly relevant to the newly independent States, such as those in Europe and the former Soviet Union.

United Nations specialized agencies, including UNDCP and the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and international law-enforcement organizations need to interact and share, and collaborate in efforts to cope with organized-crime organizations and their involvement in terrorism and gun-running financed by revenues they obtain from the illegal drug trade. Malaysia has always advocated the need to standardize the treatment of drug-related offences. No criminal should have the liberty to seek refuge or safe haven in countries that impose minimal punishment for crimes related to drugs, whether it be for illicit trafficking or for money laundering. There must be a commonality of penalties that are meted out, allowing for sufficient deterrence of the perpetrators. Malaysia has the harshest of penalties, which is a reflection of our strong commitment to working towards a drug-free society while demonstrating our equally strong abhorrence of drug-related offences.

Before I conclude, allow me to reiterate Malaysia's position that we need to continuously review our joint efforts in fighting this menace. The threat from drug abuse and illicit trafficking is constantly changing in form and in intensity. We must be ahead of the criminals in our enduring task to defeat them. We must continue to hold on to our beliefs and principles. We must resist the temptation to engage in unilateral action to change the shape of the problem by considering the legalization of drugs or their classification as soft or hard drugs. Finally, we must strengthen our collective international determination and efforts to fight this scourge against humanity successfully.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish):* I call on Mr. Carlos Larreategui, Attorney-General of Ecuador.

Mr. LARREATEGUI (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Before I begin my statement, I should like to express to the representative of Panama my delegation's sorrow at the passing of his Foreign Minister, Mr. Julio Linares.

Ecuador has come to this great gathering - in which we consider it a great privilege to participate - convinced that we have a singular opportunity to meet, together, the challenge posed by drug trafficking, which, together with terrorism, violence and corruption, threatens social peace and democracy and seriously jeopardizes the future of our peoples.

It is possible that at this stage of the proceedings everything, or almost everything, has already been said on the subject. Perhaps all that will be new in my words will be the way I speak them. Thus, and in order to comply with your recommendation, Sir, that we be brief, I shall confine myself to setting forth in broad terms what my country is doing and plans to do on the subject that has brought us together and what it expects from the international community.

My country's geographic situation has, regrettably, made it a link in the chain of the illicit transit of drugs between South America and the United States and Europe. In our region, Ecuador is a bridge between the producers of coca and the processing and distribution centres. At the same time, the chemical precursors used in refining centres pass through Ecuador and return via the same route with processed drugs on their way to consumer markets. Moreover, my country is an important locus for the laundering of illicit money.

My country's complex position notwithstanding, the national Government has responded firmly and soberly to the criminal activities threatening not only the moral fibre of society but the integrity of its legal, social and public-order institutions. The reaction of our competent authorities to these challenges has been swift and harsh. At the level of police action, we have imprisoned the main perpetrators of these crimes and seized their property - of which they have a great deal. In the past year, we have confiscated some 7,079 kilos of cocaine, 306 kilos of coca paste and 216 kilos of marijuana. At the administrative level, we have set up a National Council for the Control of

Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances, over which I have the honour to preside. This autonomous and independent body is responsible for the prevention of the manufacture and the control and inspection of chemical precursors and, through the Ministry of Health, the rehabilitation of drug users.

Furthermore, the Government of Ecuador, under Mr. Sixto Durán Ballen, has adopted a firm and resolute policy in its tireless fight against illicit drug trafficking. This position was reiterated at the recent summit meeting of the leaders of the Rio Group held in Santiago de Chile. To that end, we have mobilized all the human, technical and material resources available to the nation.

This year, we have adopted a five-year national plan to prevent and control the use of drugs, with the following objectives: to reduce supply and demand; to make total prevention a daily exercise in order to make our population physically, psychologically and socially sound; to include preventive education in the normal and remedial educational curriculums, backed up by a wide-ranging plan for training teachers; to protect each Ecuadorian as the greatest and best source of intellectual, material, historical and cultural wealth; to commit ourselves to involving the voluntary sector, particularly non-governmental organizations, in programmes and projects combating drug abuse; to coordinate actions with specialized bodies in order to buttress, at the technical and operational levels, the agencies that are implementing the national plan; to adopt programmes to promote alternative crops and for industrializing and marketing beneficial products that can counteract drug production, consumption and traffic; and to rescue ethical and moral values in the individual, the family and society.

In the legal field, Ecuador has signed and ratified many multilateral instruments to do with drugs, and I should like to point out that Ecuador was one of the first countries to ratify the 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which has been incorporated into the Law on Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances that Ecuador promulgated on 17 September 1990. On the bilateral level, Ecuador has signed a number of conventions with the countries of the Andean area and with Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico, and also with Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

My delegation welcomes the Organization's initiative of holding these high-level meetings in order to alleviate the concern felt by many countries that the subject of international cooperation in the war on drugs would be put on the back burner. In this regard, we agree with Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, who reminded us yesterday that drugs are a world-wide threat at least as great as any other of the ills that are afflicting humankind at this time of crisis.

In this connection, Ecuador is convinced that this difficult enterprise requires States to stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity. For its part, my country will continue to be assiduous in adopting internal measures to combat the manifold adverse and corrupting manifestations of the drug traffic.

Along these lines, we also believe that there should be an equal degree of commitment on the part of the consuming countries, which must view this great crusade as a great campaign in which the principle of equal responsibility is unequivocally recognized. This is why it is becoming ever more urgent for enough resources and international assistance to be allocated to help us fulfil the obligation to eradicate this ignominious scourge, an obligation that our sacred duty towards the future of our peoples imposes on us.

As many other speakers have emphasized, the war on drugs requires resolute and coordinated action by all the world's peoples, and in which there is no room for indifference. My country will continue undaunted in the struggle it has begun, and will offer its cooperation to other States, in so far as we can, in order to ensure that the objectives we are determined to achieve are indeed fulfilled.

The moment demands less rhetoric and more action.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on General El Sayed Lotfi Gheith, Assistant Minister of the Interior of Egypt.

Mr. GHEITH (Egypt) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: It is my great pleasure and honour to participate in this high-level meeting on behalf of General Hassan El Alfy, Egyptian Minister of the Interior, who sends the Assembly his sincere compliments and best wishes for this General Assembly meeting.

This meeting reflects the international community's determination to continue its all-embracing struggle against the narcotics evil. It also demonstrates the sincere desire of our peoples and Governments to expand our drug combating activities and to devise more effective techniques in dealing with this problem, which continues to be one of the gravest issues both at the national and international levels. We are confident that this meeting will be able to formulate effectual recommendations which, when implemented, will contribute to the cause of peace and security the world over.

Egypt was one of the first States to recognize the gravity of the problem of narcotics. To Egypt's credit is the fact that it was the first State in the world to enact the first law to criminalize hashish cultivation and importation, in 1879 and the first to establish a law enforcement agency, in 1929, specializing in combating illicit drugs, namely the Anti-Narcotics General Administration, over which I now have the honour of presiding.

Egypt has participated effectively in promoting international efforts to combat and control drugs through accession to various international conventions in this respect.

Egypt has continued to play an active role in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs since its inception in 1946, and is also a member of its subcommission for the Near and Middle Easts.

At the regional level, Egypt plays a vital role in both the Arab and the African spheres. It focuses on cooperation and coordination with the various States concerned in combating the illicit traffic in drugs in our region as well as the transit trafficking targeting other regions of the world. Egypt has organized and/or participated in numerous conferences for Heads of Arab and African drug law-enforcement agencies, and our joint efforts have resulted in prosecution of a number of significant international cases in Egypt as well as in a number of other States.

In the area of training, Egypt contributes greatly to training officers of Arab and African drug law-enforcement agencies, and participates in implementing United Nations strategy for training in the region. Our efforts in this direction have received a considerable boost when Cairo was chosen, in 1990, as the headquarters for the first United Nations Regional Training Centre established in Africa.

At another level, we also cooperate with a number of friendly States, particularly Federal Germany, in organizing joint courses for African officers.

Within the parameters set by the principal goal of this meeting, namely the assessment of our efforts and achievements in the area of international cooperation over the past few years, I should like to present Egypt's views and efforts, primarily in respect of the implementation of the 1988 United Nations Convention and the Global Programme of Action.

In the field of criminalization and punishment, Egypt enacted in 1989 a new law, for which the 1988 Convention was the main source of many of its provisions.

Concerning the confiscation of narcotics assets, Egyptian legislation permits confiscation of the proceeds of drug related crimes, and of any land or means of transportation used in committing such crimes. Egyptian authorities accord a high priority to cooperation with all the States concerned in this field within the framework of international conventions and national legislation. We hope to benefit, in the near future, from the training and consultative services as well as from the technical assistance that will be provided by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to Member States in the context of the efforts aimed at implementing the Global Programme of Action.

In the area of extradition, Egypt cooperates with other States, both in terms of extradition and also in the exchange of prisoners, in consonance with the norms of international law, with the reservation concerning extradition of foreign prisoners in drug related cases, namely that extradition should take place after service in Egypt by such prisoners of the full sentence passed by Egyptian courts.

Egypt sometimes allows drug consignments to enter its territory or to transit under surveillance by its law enforcement agencies. We have used this method successfully in arresting traffickers and in prosecuting several significant international cases, in cooperation with police and customs authorities of a number of Arab, Asian and European States, as well as the law enforcement agencies of the United States of America.

With respect to the control of precursors, chemicals and solvents used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, we have put several such substances under customs and security controls with the ultimate aim of controlling all other substances listed in tables I and II of the 1988 Convention.

In connection with transit traffic in narcotics, Egypt cooperates with friendly States in joint programmes to fight narcotics transit traffic operations; those programmes make use of a detailed and accurate database.

The delegation of Egypt appeals to the United Nations and all its Member States to take urgent and effective steps to support combating activities in Africa and to redouble their contribution to that effort - which, so far, has not exceeded 6 per cent of United Nations drug-control outlays in 1992, a very modest contribution indeed given the grave indications that Africa is being increasingly targeted in the area of transit trafficking. I should also like to stress the importance of extending assistance to Africa in alleviating the effects of certain problems that exacerbate the drug situation in the continent, such as unemployment,

indebtedness, drought and desertification. Such problems should be addressed through the creation of better opportunities for development in Africa and through opening the markets of affluent States to Africa's products.

With respect to detection and eradication of illicit cultivation, Egyptian law enforcement agencies continue to vigorously deploy efforts aimed at detecting and eradicating illicit drug cultivations with the help of the assistance extended to us under the long-term United Nations programme scheduled to run until 1995. We have signed the latest of the relevant conventions of that programme in Cairo on 28 September.

On behalf of my Government, I wish to convey our sincere appreciation to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and its Executive Director, Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, for the active support that has enabled us to strengthen our efforts aimed at reducing the area of illicit cultivation and to limit the flow of drugs into Egypt and other countries.

On the other hand, we hope that, in coordination with the competent United Nations organs and with developed countries, the UNDCP will adopt an international programme that uses advanced technology for the accurate and timely detection and eradication of illicit cultivation in various regions. Such a programme should be devised in consultation with producer States and must embody restraints that would safeguard the national security and sovereignty of such States while taking into account environmental and population safety considerations.

Our aspiration after a drug-free world will be realized neither through good intentions, no matter how sincere, nor through country-specific efforts, no matter how effective they may be. The attainment of that goal requires a sincere dedicated collective effort through the mechanisms created by international instruments, in a new spirit that transcends formalities and narrow interests and that opts decisively for carrying through the much needed international struggle against this horrific scourge.

I seize this opportunity to appeal to the General Assembly to call upon world leaders to intensify their mutual cooperation in facing up to all the threats and challenges that confront the international community, especially those posed by drug trafficking and terrorism. Creative action in this respect is certainly the best legacy we can bequeath to our children and grandchildren - and to all mankind, which yearns for a better, brighter, more secure and prosperous world.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on His Excellency Mr. George Ioan Danescu, Minister of the Interior of Romania.

Mr. DANESCU (Romania) *(spoke in Romanian; English text furnished by the delegation):* I wish on behalf of the Romanian Government to convey our best wishes to all participants in these important meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking. We are most favourably impressed by the international community's efforts and by the firm commitments by Heads of State or Government to expand those efforts into coordinated activities and to set priorities in the international fight against the illicit production, consumption and trafficking of drugs.

As a result of the political, economic and social changes achieved during the transition period in Romania, the institutions of the rule of law have been created; hence, human rights and fundamental freedoms are fully observed and respected, without discrimination, according to international standards.

The new direction recently promoted in our society in the fields of law, the economy and politics have been perceived in various ways. For the majority of the population, these began a process of genuine freedom, but for some people they represented new possibilities for criminality, with drug-related crime holding a prominent place.

The opening of our borders led to an enormous growth in the number of persons and vehicles and the quantities of goods entering and leaving Romania. That opportune situation has been exploited by networks of drug traffickers who use Romania as an important bridge linking East and West.

In addition to Romania's special geographical position, we must also consider the present situation in the former Yugoslavia. Owing to the ongoing conflict in that country, the hard core of drug trafficking has shifted to the second segment of the "Balkan route", as it has been called - which includes Romania. That is how criminal organizations avoid losing large quantities of drugs that net them substantial sums of money.

In that connection, I must note that the huge sums of money generated by drug trafficking attract Romanian citizens as well. Foreign criminal organizations send representatives to try to make connections among Romanian criminals; this promotes the organization and internationalization of drug trafficking.

Another category of Romanians involved in this kind of crime are individuals who left the country many years ago and settled abroad. Some have been recruited by international networks, and serve as their couriers or intermediaries. Over the years, they have accumulated

large sums of money which, after December 1989, they invested in Romania, where they returned to live. The mafia-like organizations to which these people belong are stretching out their tentacles to our country; there are indications that some of the dirty money produced by drug trafficking is being laundered in Romania.

But in spite of all that, we may safely say that no market for drugs has been created in Romania, and that Romania remains free of drug addicts. The only individuals identified as drug addicts have been foreign residents or foreigners in Romania for one reason or another.

Given such considerations we may assert that Romania is merely a transit country for drugs bound for Western Europe, while at the same time it is being used as a turn-round point for the cocaine coming from South America.

Apart from what I have mentioned so far I should like to add that the Romanian legislation on drugs which regulates the activity of the competent authorities was adopted in 1969, a fact which somewhat hinders their activity. A new draft law on narcotics has been worked out and submitted for discussion and passage to Parliament. We can also say that we have taken an important step forward by ratifying the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, the Vienna Convention of 1988.

Fully aware that good results in the fight against drug abuse and drug trafficking can be achieved only on the basis of close cooperation with similar authorities in other countries, we have made efforts to secure such cooperation with organizations from Europe, America and Asia.

The exchange of information and the material support granted by the United Nations and other organizations from the above-mentioned continents were of the utmost help to us in the struggle against drug trafficking in our country.

As to the amount of seizures in Romania, they range between seizures of several grams and seizures of several tons. While in 1991, 35.82 kilograms of drugs were seized, in 1992 the amount was 30.521 kilograms, and since January 1993 the amount of drugs seized has been 11,396.165 kilograms. Among the most frequent drugs seized in 1993 we should mention cannabis, with a capture of 11,183.160 kilograms.

We are also witnessing an intensification of the activities carried out by criminal organizations from South America, which are diversifying their methods of introducing into Romania cocaine bound for Western Europe, with the participation of criminals from Canada, the United States of America and Romania.

As to the licit production and the legal trafficking in narcotic substances and products and of precursors and essential substances, strict controls operate both in the institutions that produce medicine containing narcotic substances and in those producing opium poppies for medical use. All these steps that have been taken jointly by interested bodies and organizations from Romania explain why there have been no cases of the diversion to criminal activities of drugs and precursors from licit production sources. For the same purpose, measures have been taken by interested ministries to authorize the importation and exportation of the chemical essentials and precursors that could be used for the illicit manufacturing of drugs.

Given this package of regulations we can firmly state that in Romania there are no clandestine laboratories; and no synthetic drugs have been discovered so far.

Although we have no drug addicts among Romanian citizens and therefore no deaths from overdose - at least not recorded lately - the Romanian authorities have been confronted with a relatively new phenomenon that is spreading fast. This is the inhaling by some young children and teenagers of volatile substances, which are not drugs in the proper sense of the term, but which, in our opinion, could lead to the taking of genuine drugs. With respect to such persons educational steps have been taken in conjunction with educational bodies, teachers, charitable organizations, schools and medical institutions.

The quite striking proportions of the drug problem require the elaboration of new strategies, new objectives and international cooperation mechanisms which, while respecting and observing the sovereignty of States, should act more efficiently against the international trading operations of those persons who make fortunes by means of illegal drug trafficking and who endanger the stability of many societies of the world.

Romania, a signatory of all United Nations programmes and resolutions aimed at developing international cooperation in the fight against drug abuse and trafficking, intends to put into effect the recommendations and conclusions of this session of the General Assembly so as to limit the effects of this scourge as much as possible.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Spanish):* I now call on Mr. Jorge Ramón Valdés, Attorney-General of Panama.

Mr. VALDES (Panama) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Mr. President, the delegation of the Republic of Panama wishes to pay its respects to you and hopes that your presidency will be successful.

Seen as a socio-economic phenomenon, drug consumption has been reflecting growing tendencies that are extremely disquieting, and our children, our youth and our national identity have been deeply affected by this dreadful scourge, in spite of the efforts to combat it.

The Government of the Republic of Panama, at all levels, has resolutely undertaken the implementation of a policy aimed at putting into practice measures to prevent, combat and curb drug abuse, narcotrafficking and the use of our financial and trade system for money-laundering, while at the same time making efforts to prevent the legitimization of activities arising out of narcotrafficking.

We are convinced that through preventive education we shall be able to combat this dreadful scourge and steal a march on crime, and that by educating youth and adults we shall achieve a deeper betterment of the human being and enhance self-esteem, thereby creating true social awareness against drugs by erecting a cultural barrier that will protect our population from the harmful consequences of drug trafficking.

We have also designed new national strategies, taking into account primarily the development of integrated prevention policies by mobilizing our communities through massive education of students at primary, secondary and university levels. We have also developed programmes for specialized training for civil servants, members of civic clubs and the staff of private enterprises throughout the country.

With regard to activities aimed at curbing the illicit drug traffic and related crime, we would point out that the Public Ministry - in an effort to strengthen the activities of the Specialized Secretariat for Drug-Related Crimes in the Attorney-General's Office, the offices in charge of summary proceedings and the Judicial Technical Police, which under the law now comes under the Ministry's supervision - created and installed in all judicial districts throughout the country specialized sub-secretariats for drug-related crimes. These entities are responsible for any activity with regard to summary proceedings, including issuing search warrants, for drug-related crimes. Their work has already produced results throughout the country, especially in the provinces which, because of their geographical peculiarities and the development of economic activities, are choice locations for drug-processing.

Knowing full well that for an effective fight against this scourge it is necessary to have international cooperation, the national authorities have carried out a considerable number of operations jointly with the anti-drug agencies of the United States, INTERPOL and the German police, among other agencies, and have succeeded in confiscating large quantities of drugs and other items connected with this traffic.

With regard to international legislation, we must make special mention of the fact that the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (the Vienna Convention) was recently submitted to our legislative assembly for ratification and is being debated. Thus Panama continues to reaffirm its policy of international cooperation with a view to the eradication of drug trafficking and the consumption of illicit substances.

We wish to point out that the treaty between the Republic of Panama and the United States of America on mutual legal assistance in penal matters was ratified by Panama by law 20 of 22 July 1991 and we hope it will enter into force when it is ratified by the Congress of the United States and formalized by an exchange of notes for the mutual benefit of our two countries. At the time of a revision of the Special Law on Drugs, we concluded that it was necessary to reform some of its articles and to incorporate new types of crime with a view to regulating illicit conduct not envisaged in the current legislation.

In view of all this, the Public Ministry, making use of the legislative initiative granted to the Attorney-General of our country, has submitted to our parliament a draft law designed to reform the current legislation on drugs. The draft makes provision for restructuring the penal standards in the field of international drug trafficking. We have incorporated provisions with regard to aggravating circumstances in the purchase, sale and transshipment of drugs; regulation of the procedure for the delivery of drugs under surveillance and undercover operations. It is intended that goods seized because of a connection with drug-related crimes be used in campaigns for the prevention of crime, rehabilitation, and the suppression of drug trafficking. In addition, we have established two offices of the public prosecutor which specialize in drug-related crimes and which would have competence and jurisdiction throughout the country.

All these changes are aimed at the formulation of a special law on drugs, the fundamental purpose of which is maintenance of the struggle against drug trafficking through the preventive functions of the penal law.

As regards the laundering of drug-related money, we can see that every day we are confronted by new methods used by drug dealers to separate their income from illicit sources from their principal source, through the creation of complex financial transactions which give the appearance of legitimacy to their funds. To deal with this situation, the Government of the Republic of Panama has in its judicial system a number of measures for enforcing the controls for the prevention of the laundering of money derived from drug trafficking. Under the special law on drugs there is provision for sanctions against all those who, in one way or another, participate in the crime of money laundering.

Another measure taken by the Government to curb this activity is Cabinet decree No. 41 of 1990, which requires banks to obtain proper identification of their clients and to have them provide information about the sources of deposits and the purposes of cash withdrawals amounting to more than $10,000.

Our Supreme Court has issued various rulings and judicial orders imposing on the people involved in these operations an obligation to supply all the required information to the penal authorities on a given bank account while making it clear that our country respects the confidentiality of certain bank accounts. However, this has nothing to do with the concept of secret accounts.

To this end and in order to maintain a salutary financial centre, the members of the national banking community have issued a number of agreements concerning the identification of financial transactions involving cash, cheques, travellers cheques and other payment orders with blank endorsements. The Bankers' Association of Panama, which brings together almost all the banks in the country, has laid down rules that prevent members from making improper use of its services.

The Republic of Panama, which is based on the principles of protecting life, strict legality, respect for legal institutions, both basic and operational, both national and international, is determined to use whatever means are available to put an end to the terrible scourge of drug trafficking.

In the face of this phenomenon, which is changing constantly, the objectives of the Republic of Panama may be stated as follows: first, our primary responsibility is to protect the physical, mental and emotional state of the people affected by chemical substances; secondly, we must protect the national political, social, economic and financial structures against organized crime, whose participants try to use our geographical position and our financial and trade system for their own purposes; thirdly, we must strengthen the links of cooperation and international solidarity through bilateral and multilateral conventions to curb drug trafficking in all its manifestations.

We should like to sum up the position of Panama in this great struggle by the civilized world against the increasing threat of drug trafficking, in the words: Panama is fighting! And it is fighting despite the fact that the drug barons are trying to use the country, because of its location, as a springboard for their deadly cargoes. But we are not daunted by economic limitations or transitory political changes. Panama is organizing. We are legislating and are perfecting our police and investigation activities. We have strict regulations against money laundering. All our efforts are directed against drugs. We are complying literally with conventions and treaties, and we are beginning to see positive signs which should be an example and model for other nations that have to contend with similar problems. It is with pride that we say that Panama is fighting and is achieving its goals.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Roan Perera, Secretary to the Legal Committee of the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board of Sri Lanka.

Mr. PERERA (Sri Lanka): The delegation of Sri Lanka welcomes the convening of these high-level plenary meetings on international drug control to examine the status of international cooperation against drug abuse and drug trafficking. The according of special importance to the subject and this stocktaking exercise by the international community are timely. The question of international drug control does indeed demand high priority, given the political, economic and social dimensions of the problem and the grave threat that it poses to the health and life of our people, particularly the youth of our countries.

Moreover, new and alarming dimensions of drug trafficking have emerged in the post-cold-war period. The ramifications of the nexus between narcotics peddlers, terrorists and the illicit arms trade now go beyond the socio-economic sphere and pose an ever-increasing threat to peace and security within and between nations in many parts of the world. The residue of the excessive armament inventories of the cold-war era has resulted in open arms bazaars. All types of armed groups, including powerful commercial interests that drive the illicit drug trade, have access to this sophisticated military hardware. Drug peddlers, terrorists and gun runners seem to have joined forces to create elaborate international networking arrangements to provide the funding and the logistics for this deadly trade in illicit drugs and arms.

The results of this self-sustaining cycle of violence and social disintegration are only too evident in the increasing number of terrorist and drugs-related conflicts around the world. International preventive diplomacy and efforts in the area of national political reconciliation will not be fully successful so long as the flows of illicit arms and of illicit drugs support each other. These act as a formidable counterforce to political efforts, at national and international levels, towards the prevention or resolution of conflicts. The terrorists will have no incentive to turn away their financiers and enter the democratic process of political expression, and the drug dealers will have no incentive to discard their "valued customers", unless the international community takes concerted and integrated action against this twin evil of narco-terrorism and the illicit arms trade.

Mr. Kabir (Bangladesh), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The growing complexity and the multifaceted dimensions of the problem of drug abuse and drug trafficking therefore require a carefully coordinated policy and a plan of action at the national, regional and international levels.

The Government of Sri Lanka recently adopted a national plan on drug abuse and drug control which takes into account the national, regional and international aspects of this question. At the national level, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board is the principal agency in Sri Lanka dealing with the question of drug control. The functions of the Board relate to all aspects of prevention and reduction of drug abuse, the control of the supply of drugs and the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts. The Police Narcotic Bureau, which is a specialized unit within the police department, deals with suppression of illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

On the aspect of demand-reduction programmes, the National Dangerous Drugs Control Board has taken a series of measures focusing on special target groups such as educational institutions. We are conscious of the need to implement demand-reduction programmes in a supportive environment with the active support of parents and community leaders. At the regional level, during the first week of this month Sri Lanka hosted a regional seminar, under the auspices of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), to work out modalities for the prevention and reduction of drug abuse in the South Asian countries.

With regard to the treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration of drug addicts, the Dangerous Drugs Control Board implements a programme of treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration in close cooperation with non-governmental organizations which are active in the field of drug control. Draft legislation has also been finalized by the Board's legislative committee to provide a comprehensive legal framework for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug offenders. The law envisages treatment and rehabilitation of drug offenders through institutions managed by the Board as well as through private institutions which are subject to supervision by the Board. The draft legislation also provides for a court order for treatment and rehabilitation in lieu of a penal sentence, in appropriate cases. It also provides for voluntary submission to treatment and rehabilitation.

In the field of international drug control, Sri Lanka is a State party to the principal international legal instruments. Sri Lanka recently ratified the United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and also the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances. At the regional level, Sri Lanka is a party to the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was adopted in 1991 and which entered into force on 15 September 1993. The SAARC Convention reaffirms and supplements at the regional level the principal international legal instruments in the field of drug control.

A coordinated programme of international cooperation is essential for dealing with the problem of narcotic drugs, given the transboundary dimensions of this problem. The 1988 United Nations Convention provides a comprehensive legal regime to combat the problem through the establishment of drug offences as grave criminal offences, the incorporation of the "extradite or prosecute" principle and the related concept of universal jurisdiction in relation to drug offences and measures to promote international judicial cooperation to address such acts of criminality. We also note that the draft statute for the establishment of an international criminal court formulated recently by the International Law Commission covers the offences under the 1988 United Nations Convention, although further elaboration is required on some elements of the matter relating to the Court's jurisdiction.

A legal workshop for South Asian countries on the implementation of the 1988 United Nations Convention, sponsored by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), is currently being held in Colombo. We are very grateful to UNDCP for sponsoring this workshop in Sri Lanka; it will no doubt benefit the Asian countries. A well-coordinated programme of cooperation at the regional level would undoubtedly supplement and strengthen measures of international drug control.

The development of mechanisms for the exchange of information and intelligence related to drug offences forms an important part of the international strategy to combat the problem. Sri Lanka took the initiative within the SAARC forum for the establishment of a mechanism for enhancing the effectiveness of law-enforcement action in the region and for maintaining channels of communication for the secure and rapid exchange of information between the concerned agencies of Member States. A Regional Drug Offences Monitoring Desk has now been established; it is located at the Sri Lanka Police Narcotic Bureau. A directory of national focal points of concerned agencies of SAARC countries has also been finalized. These measures for mutual assistance already implemented in the SAARC region could form the basis for wider cooperation, as envisaged under the United Nations Convention.

Sri Lanka, for its part, stands ready to enter into cooperative arrangements with countries of other regions on the question of drug trafficking. Only a comprehensive network of arrangements at the bilateral, regional and international levels could meet the threat posed by international drug trafficking, which, unless effectively countered through a well-coordinated global plan of action, would end the political, economic and social fabric of all nations.

Sri Lanka is therefore pleased to support the draft resolution on international drug control, which provides a framework for enhanced international cooperation in drug control and the fight against drug abuse.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. MARTINI HERRERA (Guatemala) *(interpretation from Spanish):* Before taking up the subject before us, I should like to express, on behalf of the Central American Community, our deepest sympathy to the people, the Government and, especially, the Mission of Panama, and to the family of His Excellency the late Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, Mr. Julio Linares, who died early this morning in this city, where he had come to take part in these meetings of the Assembly.

The Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama have decided to participate jointly in dealing with in one of the most important aspects of international relations, one that has negative effects on the social and economic development of all the nations of the world, be they industrialized or developing.

The impact of drug crime, its scope and its invasion of our societies upset and erode our basic social, economic, cultural, political and legal structures, thus endangering the very political stability of nations and bringing about an unbridled increase in violence, corruption and insecurity.

The seventeenth special session of the General Assembly was devoted to the international fight against the abuse of and illicit trafficking in drugs, and it culminated in the adoption of the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action on international cooperation against the production, supply, demand, and illicit trafficking in and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Last year the General Assembly decided to devote four plenary meetings this year to an evaluation of the progress made.

The Central American countries believe that the activities of the international community in the struggle to eradicate this problem have been effective, albeit of limited scope. On the one hand, sophisticated monitoring and communications systems have made possible seizures of such substances worldwide. On the other hand, the underlying causes of production and unlawful trafficking in drugs have not been properly tackled.

The poverty, destitution and despair of large portions of the population, particularly in rural areas, create a fertile field in which the cartels and other organized groups can devote their substantial profits to the production of illicit crops. This has a negative impact on the environment because of land clearance and the use of herbicides and other chemical substances that find their way into rivers and lakes, or stay in the soil.

Many countries have been adversely affected by political conflicts, geopolitical changes, pandemics, recessions and economic restructuring, all of which have upset the usual harmony of society. Drugs have come to be viewed as promising a temporary escape. Worse still, the production of and traffic in illicit substances are the major source of funds for armed groups seeking political power through fratricidal wars.

The unfavourable international economic situation plays a preponderant role in increased drug production. The prevailing theory of supply and demand and free-market trends in international trade have led to a drastic fall in the prices of legal export products. In Central America, for example, the drastic drop in the price of export commodities has caused a deep economic recession. The industrialized countries have begun to implement trade measures that restrict the import of bananas into their markets. Some of our countries have been threatened by the application of foreign labour laws, to the detriment of

our legal production. The countries involved are also the market *par excellence* for our drugs, for, again in accordance with the law of supply and demand, consumers in the industrialized countries are prepared to pay excessive sums for narcotics, but do not want to pay a fair price for lawful products. A long-term response to the problem of drug trafficking would be to increase the productivity of and income from conventional agriculture. We must promote dynamic agricultural development on the basis of viable international agreements guaranteeing fair, remunerative and stable prices for the producers of licit goods. This is a topic the General Assembly must now take up seriously.

The Central American countries have tackled the problem of narcotics in the businesslike manner it demands. The Central American Presidents have referred to the need to promote international as well as subregional cooperation in the fight against drug trafficking. They are well aware of the special geographical position of Central America, which international cartels have taken advantage of, using the region as an air and maritime bridge for drugs *en route* to northern markets. They know that the region's technological and financial resources are too limited to carry out more careful monitoring of drug trafficking. It is time people understood the immense seriousness of the problem.

Nevertheless, the Central American region has increased the financial resources it devotes to the international effort and has initiated plans and programmes on prevention, investigation, intelligence gathering and information. We are also putting in place systems to monitor, control and register air, sea, land, lake and river traffic. Efforts are being made to locate clandestine landing areas, aircraft refuelling points, warehouses and raw materials. We are working to locate and destroy poppy and marijuana crops, as well as other similar crops for which Central America provides fertile soil.

The Central American countries have cooperated with international agencies and organs and have held seminars on the technical assistance the United Nations International Drug Control Programme can provide. They have participated with other interested countries, particularly the United States of America, in efforts to combat drug trafficking, in strict compliance with the principles of international law respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States, and have signed extradition agreements that make it possible to apprehend and try drug lords. Central America rejects, however, the extraterritorial application of the laws of other countries on its territory and any attempt to pursue such policies, whether within or outside the region.

Central America believes the international community must reaffirm the priority given in the Global Programme of Action to the prevention and reduction of the illegal use of narcotic substances, for which purpose sufficient resources must be allocated. At the same time, we consider that much more information and additional financing are required to help the region wage more energetically the war against illegal drug production and trafficking.

The sophistication of international cartels and the overall international economic situation have resulted in limited achievements for the Global Programme of Action and national and subregional programmes. Crop substitution programmes have not been effective enough. Governments in the North seem to be concentrating on attempting to persuade Governments in the South to halt the cultivation and processing of drug-related crops and to prevent their sale abroad. That approach, however, ignores the fact that the driving force behind the drug trade is its enormous profitability, owing to the increased demand in the North. That problem has not been effectively tackled.

The Central American countries are parties to the international drug-control instruments, including the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Their Governments have received for consideration a plan to establish a Central American standing commission on the eradication of the production, trafficking, consumption and use of narcotics and psychotropic substances, which was drawn up at the ninth Summit meeting of Central American Presidents, held in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, in December 1990.

It is hoped that the proposed Central American commission will begin to function at an early date, because we are convinced that its activities could significantly promote cooperation between the countries of the region in this struggle. The convention creating the commission is to be signed at the fourteenth Summit meeting of Central American Presidents, to be held in Guatemala at the end of this month.

Last February an anti-drug conference attended by Central American Heads of Government was held in Belize City to consider coordinating regional efforts to combat the illicit production, trafficking and consumption of drugs. In its Final Declaration it deplored the drug scourge and reaffirmed the commitment to make every effort to prevent the region's being used for such purposes. It expressed the conviction that only through regional efforts could a solution be found to the problem created by the use of the region for illegal production, trafficking and consumption.

The Central American Governments reaffirmed on that occasion the importance of coordinating their efforts with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission, with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and with the United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Costa Rica.

The Central American Presidents who met in Panama stated:

> "We reiterate our vigorous condemnation of the production of, trafficking in and illicit consumption of drugs. We reaffirm our commitment to make every possible effort to prevent our countries from becoming a base for drug trafficking, as this leads to actions perpetrated against society and violates the fundamental human rights of individuals. At the same time, we agree to intensify regional cooperation and international cooperation to eradicate this scourge".

Domestic legislation has been improved in each country where this was needed, and in some cases new legislation has been enacted. In Costa Rica, a National Drug Council was established, and the Ministry of Justice adopted a drug programme. The Assembly of El Salvador enacted a law governing drug-related activities, thus introducing certain changes into older legislation. In September, the anti-drug division of the civilian national police was instituted. It has established relations based on cooperation and exchange of information with the countries in the area: Colombia, Mexico and the United States.

In Guatemala, a Commission Against Drug Addiction and Illicit Trafficking was created. A law on drug-related activities has been enacted, allocating more resources to this problem, and norms, methods and procedures were adopted to implement justice speedily and efficiently. In Nicaragua, a National Drug Commission has been created. The National Assembly has already received for study a draft law, on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and penal legislation on this subject does not allow the release on bail of any criminals involved in drug trafficking.

The Central American region is well aware of the need to adopt programmes and measures, on a regional basis, in order to treat, rehabilitate and bring about the social reinsertion of persons affected, particularly young people, and is also aware of the need for adequate educational programmes.

The Central American countries are convinced that without an improvement in the economic conditions of the region, their efforts to combat drugs will have only a very limited effect. And that is why we would emphasize once again the need to enhance international cooperation and establish an ongoing programme in our countries, including programmes to deal with the production and marketing of alternative agricultural products. We need an improvement in terms of trade, we need investments that help our economies, a reduction in our debt, and we need support for our economic and social development, respecting all the while the environment and the culture of our peoples.

The international community, and in particular the United Nations, must serve as a central forum to promote cooperation and improve general living standards. The fight against narcotics must be given top priority. It must move ahead and in this way, our planet can be shared in a peaceful and healthy way by one and all.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Police General Chavalit Yodmani of Thailand.

Mr. YODMANI (Thailand): It is a great pleasure and honour for me to address the Assembly today.

These special meetings of the General Assembly reaffirm the priority that the United Nations attaches to international drug control. Our task as high-level representatives of various Governments is to review the progress made to date and inject the process with the political will that is so essential to the movement towards eradication of the problem.

The problem of the abuse and illicit trafficking of drugs, as we all are aware, has dramatically increased in scope and complexity. Despite drug-control measures, the demand for and illicit production and trafficking of drugs continue to rise. It is painfully clear that serious problems related to the use of drugs have emerged, among them HIV and AIDS resulting from intravenous drug use and violent crimes caused by drug addiction and the drug trade. The diversity of the drug problem is also reflected in the diversion of chemicals used for the illicit production of drugs, and its complexity is due to the huge profits possible in the illicit drug trade.

Thailand has fully committed itself to the fight against this drug menace. What we have done is self-explanatory. Thailand is a Party to the 1961 Convention amended by the 1972 Protocol, and also to the 1971 Convention. Even though we have not yet acceded to the 1988 Convention, we have already put many of the measures provided in the Convention into action. We are proud to say that much of what we have done is in line with the strategies outlined in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline and the Global Programme of Action. We have set our priorities within the context of a clearly defined and achievable

national strategy which provides the proper balance between the demand for drugs and a reduction in the drug supply.

Thailand would like to commend the United Nations for its adoption of the Global Programme of Action, which outlines the integrated strategies on drug abuse control. However, the implementation of the Global Programme of Action can be achieved only through the concerted efforts of every nation in translating the words of the Global Programme of Action into concrete action. We are of the view that to help implement the Global Programme of Action, technical assistance and financial support from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), in cooperation with other United Nations specialized agencies, should be provided to the relevant countries, particularly the developing ones, for the drafting of their master plans on drug control. The necessary support and the provision of adequate resources would enable the countries to effectively implement their programmes.

The subregional concept initiated by UNDCP is another laudable example of international cooperation in the fight against the scourge of drugs. Thailand fully supports UNDCP's initiative, because we believe that one country alone cannot effectively overcome the problem. Countries that belong to the same geographical region should join hands and work together to eliminate this pervasive evil.

In this belief, Thailand has been working closely with all the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in a concerted effort to fight against drugs. Thailand also initiated the First Ministerial Conference on Cooperation on Drug Abuse Control between the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand in March 1992, which resulted in a Joint Declaration of the three countries stating their firm commitment to alleviate the drug problem. To strengthen cooperation between the three countries and to translate the Declaration into practical action, a Three-Year Narcotics Control Assistance Plan was drawn up by the Royal Thai Government to provide training in the fields of both supply and demand reduction to officials from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar. The implementation of this Plan will begin next year.

Moreover, Thailand participates actively in the UNDCP subregional project between Myanmar and Thailand, and yesterday we signed the Memorandum of Understanding between the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the People's Republic of China, Thailand and UNDCP, which will serve as a cooperative framework on narcotics control in that subregion. This will open a new chapter of concerted efforts between all parties concerned.

The war against drugs will never be won if demand reduction efforts are overlooked; new kinds of drugs will always arise to replace old ones. Sometimes substances that are not even narcotic drugs are used, such as glue and other volatile substances. Thus, the problem lies mainly with the individual. Demand reduction should help the individual resist those destructive habits and encourage him or her to live a healthy and useful life in society. Most importantly, this effort should be supported by the people, as they are the ones who know and face the problem. The Royal Thai Government has tried to encourage greater participation by the people in our anti-narcotics programmes, and the results are quite satisfactory.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that we have come a long way and still have many roads to travel and hills to climb, but the knowledge that we are not alone makes this journey much easier. So I would take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the countries that have cooperated with us and helped us in our narcotics-control efforts. I would also like to reiterate Thailand's firm policy against drugs. We pledge to do our best and stand ready to work with all countries to keep the momentum going, because if we are to defeat this global menace, we must be united in purpose and act together.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Eamonn Doherty, Senior Drugs Coordinator of Ireland.

Mr. DOHERTY (Ireland): Let me begin by saying that I fully support the speech made by the Deputy Prime Minister of Belgium on behalf of the European Community.

Let me also say what a signal honour it is for me to be present here at these high-level plenary meetings of the General Assembly on drugs. I strongly believe that by adopting a Political Declaration and a Global Programme of Action in February 1990 we gave an important impetus to the international community to take positive action in the fight against a major scourge which threatens the very fabric of all our societies, a disease which threatens the future of our young people and thus the future of mankind.

During Ireland's presidency of the European Community in 1990 I had the privilege of chairing the first meetings of the European Community's senior coordinators in the fight against drugs. This group was composed of the personal representatives of the Heads of State and Government of the twelve member States of the European Community, and its coming into being underlined the seriousness with which these senior political figures

viewed the problem of drugs. During the first half of 1990 we drew up and presented to the European Council in Dublin the draft of the European Plan to Combat Drugs. This Plan was finalized in December 1990 under the Italian presidency, and forms the cornerstone of European policy in the fight against drugs.

Under the Irish presidency we also put in place a very important group in the fight against drugs, one which I am happy to say carries the name of the Dublin Group. In bringing together the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, Norway and Sweden with the European Community and its member States and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), it provides a forum for informal consultations which play an important role in directing the policies and actions of the countries involved. In order to respond positively to situations in different parts of the world, regional groups and within them mini-Dublin groups were established in major capitals in order to analyse and respond effectively to the drug problem in different regions and to enhance the overall understanding of the problem.

However, I believe that, despite the important role which we can play in the European Community and through groupings such as the Dublin Group, in the fight against drugs we need to coordinate our activities on a world-wide basis through the United Nations if we wish our efforts to work effectively towards the eradication of a problem which, though it may take different forms in different countries and regions of the world, still remains a problem we must all face in common. The drug problem is a classic example of a global challenge. Despite the efforts we have all made nationally, regionally and internationally, and despite our many successes, I do not believe we can say that we have seen any major improvement in the drug-abuse problem.

Whilst we have been fortunate, insofar as the drug problem in Ireland is small by international standards - due in small part to the close family structure of our society - it is a matter which has always been accorded a high priority by successive Irish Governments. Both enforcement and rehabilitation measures are kept under constant review, and we have seen an increase in seizures of drugs and in the number of people charged with drug offences, particularly importation and trafficking. In 1992 there was an increase of 13 per cent in the number of people charged under the Misuse of Drugs Acts. At the same time, there was an increase of 20 per cent in the number of drug seizures. However we are very conscious at all times that arrests and seizures will not by themselves provide the answer to the problem; for that reason we pay close attention to the important issues of health care and rehabilitation.

Despite all these measures, we in Ireland have seen a gradual deterioration in the level of abuse, particularly of cannabis resin. In line with our priorities we are at this point in time critically examining the national policy on all aspects of the problem including the adequacy of the resources available to the various enforcement, education and other agencies involved.

Whilst we will continue to enhance our national programme, it is only through a concerted international effort that we can hope to make any impact on the scale of the problem facing us. It is a problem which is so widespread that we regularly find further areas into which its tentacles have reached. We must not look to the problem of production alone but to the reasons for production. We must not look to the problem of consumption alone but to the reasons for this consumption.

We must take account of the economic and social factors which play an important role in many of the producer countries. When we talk of alternative development and crop substitution, we must ensure that what we are offering is a real alternative and a substitute crop for which there is a real market. We must also look to how we deal with the traffickers, who have great wealth and power and who have a vested interest in ensuring the production of the illicit crops which have made them so powerful.

We, in determining our actions, must take account of the fact that drug trafficking, from the patterns which we have seen, appears to consist of tightly knit, highly organized networks that span across countries and regions throughout the world. Seizures which have taken place appear to represent only a small percentage of what is being trafficked as evidence suggests that they rarely affect market prices. This is a clear indication of the enormity of the problem which faces us.

When we turn to the problem of consumption, we must turn our attention to the underlying socio-economic factors. In our Western world we find drug addiction problems both among the poor and socially deprived of our populations and among the relatively well off. We must try to understand and come to terms with the broader deprivations of our time that give rise to the drug abuse problem in the different strata of society. Above all we must emphasize the important and central role of drug awareness education. This education needs to take place in the home as well as in the school and, I believe, it must begin at a very early age if we are to enable children to resist the pressures of peer groups and be alert to the dangers which are facing them. We must pay attention to the problems of drugs and crime and the relationship between them. We must look at all times to the relevance

and efficacy of programmes for the rehabilitation of drug abusers.

However, while we must tackle the problems caused by consumption in our societies, we must also tackle the root cause of the problems. To do this we must tackle the problems of drug trafficking and drug pushing. We can succeed in this area only through ensuring effective coordination and cooperation between our law enforcement agencies and between our criminal justice systems. In this endeavour the United Nations has an important role to play in helping to bring about the best possible conditions to enable this cooperation to exist on a broad international scale. Within Europe we are seeking to improve this coordination and cooperation through the establishment of EUROPOL. We must never lose sight of the fact that we are engaged in a battle against organizations which operate on a multinational basis and which have huge financial resources. The structure of these organizations, and in particular their ability to launder money in major money markets, needs to be tackled comprehensively.

As I said at the beginning of my intervention, we are facing up to a global problem which threatens the very fabric of our society. In this endeavour, unless we pool our information, our technology, our research, our understanding and our resources to deal with it effectively, we may stand guilty of leaving a pernicious heritage to generations yet unborn. Despite the obstacles we may encounter, we can never afford to give up the fight. A huge burden has been placed upon us and we must, each of us, find the courage and the strength to challenge it and to win.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Brigadier General Benny Arad, Executive Director of the Anti-Drug Authority of Israel.

Mr. ARAD (Israel): On behalf of my delegation, I have the honour of addressing the General Assembly on a topic that unites us all: the global fight against drug abuse.

During the last decade, narcotics consumption has become one of the most serious threats against our society, endangering our most valuable national resources: our community members and our youth.

Israel's drug-fighting policy, like that of many countries, strives to balance the vast demands of the struggle with the limited resources of the national budget. In spite of restricted resources, efforts are being made to address the social issues confronting Israeli society, amongst them the drug problem.

The Anti-Drug Authority (ADA), as the national bureau for planning, coordination and promotion of activities, deals with a subject of an interdisciplinary nature, while our main focus is on reduction of drug supply and demand. The Authority's mandate includes formulating comprehensive nationwide policies in all areas of the fight against drug abuse and promoting and expanding the network of intervention services in the various areas of this battle. These are coupled through the coordination of all the efforts of Israel's governmental, non-governmental and public agencies in the campaign against drug abuse.

During the period of its existence, the ADA has formulated a national strategy against drug abuse based on broad interministerial coordination and cooperation.

Israel, through the ADA, has invested great efforts in the improvement of interdiction methods along the borders and at the points of passage along them. The ADA is promoting the application of more severe sentences for drug offenders and especially drug dealers. There is also an increase in the number of prosecutions of such offenders. Prevention programmes are already conducted in a growing number of schools, and the intention is to reach all schools and all grades in the future. Many activities have been initiated and implemented in the field of public education. The treatment and rehabilitation infrastructure has been improved. Research on drug abuse problems is encouraged, and many academic programmes for the training of skilled personnel to combat all aspects of drug abuse are under way.

Despite Israel's limited resources, the ADA, under clear instructions from the Prime Minister, continues tirelessly to wage the war against illicit drugs, and in this spirit, the Government of Israel has each year since 1989 increased its budget allocation for ADA's activities.

The need to fight the drug menace is haunting Israel as well as many other countries. Prevention, treatment and law enforcement all require not only great efforts but also huge resources. The drug users and hard-core addicts need the right combination of facilities, treatment, rehabilitation and other resources that it is our duty to provide.

Israel is located in a region known as a centre of world drug trafficking. Indeed, there is no production of illegal drugs of any kind in Israel itself. However, in our part of the world, the intensive drug activities along our borders, together with drugs imported to Israel from other countries, pose a tremendous threat to the fabric of our society.

While the prime responsibility in fighting illicit drugs lies with each State, it is also a point of departure for binational, regional and multinational cooperation. The unique balance of strength and weaknesses that exists in each country's war on drugs correlates with the adequacy of its national policies and programmes in the functional disciplines of treatment, prevention, law enforcement and interdiction. These elements, which lend themselves to the position of contributor or beneficiary on the international level, are interrelated with decisions taken by the United Nations and thus catalyse the work of development and progress in terms of global cooperation and striking a balance in the allocation of resources.

Israel is ready to cooperate with every nation in its region and outside it in the fight against narcotics and other drugs. Such cooperation is especially vital considering that Israel and its neighbouring countries are situated so closely to the drug- production centres and their smuggling routes. Israel and its neighbours are being used not only as drug-transit countries, but also as drug-trade and local-consumption targets.

As the prospects for peace in the Middle East grow, we have to remember that peace is made not only between Governments but also between people. The time has come to establish lasting cooperation and information exchange links between neighbouring countries in every aspect of drug warfare, along with frequent exchanges of operational information leading to successful drug interdiction by respective drug-enforcement entities.

We call on our neighbours and the world community to unite with us in the campaign against narcotic drugs as part of the efforts to promote peace in our region and all over the world. We urge our neighbours to establish a regional committee, open to all countries of the Middle East region, to combine resources, efforts and expertise and present a unified front against drug abuse and its implications.

Israel is eager to participate in the implementation of programmes that will reduce demand and inhibit the supply of narcotic drugs. Only by combining and coordinating our efforts can we create the conditions essential to eradicating this global scourge. It is our responsibility to reduce the severity of this plague, which crosses all national boundaries, and the untold suffering it causes.

We share the view that drug enforcement alone cannot provide the ultimate solution to the drug problem. However, along with other long-term measures for demand reduction, drug-law enforcement through effective interdiction will play a key role in the immediate, short- and medium-term drug warfare as long as disruption of the drug-trafficking routes remains a major means of cutting down the supply of drugs.

Israel is a party to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and its amendment. Israel is also a party to the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. We have taken all the necessary steps to implement these Conventions. We are also proceeding to amend our domestic legislation to ratify the 1988 Convention as soon as possible.

The State of Israel has made sincere efforts to establish international cooperation on a binational as well as a multinational level. Since 1991 we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and agreements of cooperation with the United States of America, France and Chile. We are trying to activate an existing agreement with Italy. Likewise, we hope to promote such agreements with other countries to stimulate binational cooperation and exchange of information on methods against drug abuse. Israel invites the international community to share the knowledge it has accumulated in all the domains of the fight against drugs.

We believe that the United Nations should adopt a stricter approach to the use of heroin, which is the main drug threat in most countries. We encourage the establishment of a central data system in each country to keep track of intervention methods and list individuals who are known as drug users or offenders. In addition, we recommend the establishment of an international information centre for exchanging information on intervention methods that are applied in the various aspects of fighting drug abuse.

Since ADA's establishment, we have cooperated with the United Nations drug-fighting bodies and taken all the necessary steps to achieve the drug-fighting goals set by the United Nations. Since 1990, representatives of the United Nations programmes - starting with the former Director of the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control and the President and representatives of the International Narcotics Control Board - have visited Israel and gained first-hand knowledge of our commitment to preventing and fighting drug addiction and trafficking. These representatives had the opportunity to see at first-hand the drug-fighting scene in Israel and to learn about our methods and special programmes. They were impressed by Israel's intervention programmes and the high quality of our professionals. We are looking forward to establishing mutual working relations with the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and to giving professional assistance to other nations.

The Government of Israel wishes to stress its total and unwavering commitment to fighting the drug scourge and to participating fully in all international efforts with each and every State.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mrs. Katalen Szomor Molnar, Executive Secretary of the Interministerial Drug Committee of Hungary.

Mrs. SZOMOR MOLNAR (Hungary): I am honoured to participate on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Hungary in these high-level meetings of the General Assembly dealing with the global problem of drug abuse and the ways and means to enhance the coherence of the system-wide activities in this field.

We are convinced that implementing a comprehensive multidisciplinary strategy at each level of society is the only way to guarantee success in the worldwide fight against drug abuse. Also, as has been stated in United Nations forums - first at the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in 1987 in Vienna - and laid down in the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, in various resolutions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the General Assembly and, most importantly, in the Global Programme of Action, a well-balanced approach to drug demand and supply reduction has to be implemented on global, regional, national and local levels.

Because of the international and highly sophisticated nature of drug criminality, and also because of the global nature of the epidemic of drug misuse of our age - well-coordinated international control and preventive actions based on the policy prepared and approved by the competent United Nations bodies are called for to give guidance to Governments in implementing their national drug strategies and in carrying out a drug policy under the guidelines of the Global Programme of Action.

Hungary is party to the 1961 and 1971 United Nations drug Conventions and by the end of this year, following the adoption of the necessary legislative measures, we are going to ratify the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

The Hungarian Government established an Inter-ministerial Drug Committee in 1991, in which the representatives of 18 ministries and national agencies are taking decisions on our drug strategy and coordinating its implementation. The Committee is supported by working groups whose tasks are the drawing up of draft legislation and professional guidelines, strategic planning, evaluation of activities, and so on, in the areas of precursors, money-laundering, treatment as an alternative to prison, treatment in prison, national training plans, national prevention policies, epidemiology and drug-testing laboratories.

As a result of the war in former Yugoslavia, the main transit line of the Balkan drug trafficking route is now traversing Hungary and my country must cope with the increased problems arising there from illegal transit, increased illegal marketing, alarming trends of growing drug abuse and its interaction with the problems of social marginalization of larger groups, together with a shift in drug using habits from softer to harder drugs, including abuse of poppy.

As a country with a well-developed pharmaceutical and chemical industry, we are striving to prevent diversion of psychotropic substances and precursors into illegal channels. Our legislation on precursors, in effect since 1990, now covers all the 22 substances.

We are aware of the importance of preventing money laundering by legal means as well as by establishing a voluntary reporting system within financial institutions. The relevant legislation is to be taken up by the Parliament at the end of this year.

A newly emerging problem in our region is the advocacy of the so-called advantages of legalizing soft, and hard, drugs. Radical groups are trying to get the support of the mass media to achieve this objective. This problem would require a more active involvement by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) in order to counter these negative tendencies.

The Government of Hungary has responded to these challenges by establishing the necessary institutional arrangements. The national police have established a crime and drug prevention network on national and county levels, and the public health service has national, county and city level medical officers who deal with the various aspects of the drug problem. We have 130 health education institutions disseminating information on the dangers of substance abuse.

Hungary has already taken innovative steps to establish a well-functioning system of multisectoral national and county level bodies entrusted with organizing prevention activities.

These steps show that we have done a lot, nationally, to prevent any aggravation of the drug abuse situation. At the same time, we should like to count on continuing guidance and support from UNDCP and from other multisectoral international organizations, such as, for example, the Pompidou Group.

We encourage UNDCP to continue its efforts to harmonize the various levels of international cooperation against drug abuse in order to allow for the maximum use of resources and eliminate overlap and duplication of efforts.

We fully support the demand reduction resolution from the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-sixth session inviting international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations to formulate strategies in the drug demand reduction field through defining target groups and developing special prevention programmes adapted to local social and cultural environments, to develop expertise through training and also to outline damage reduction programmes and programmes to prevent the spread of human immunodeficiency virus epidemics.

In the light of the global importance of demand reduction, UNDCP should further develop its research activities with a view to providing Governments with primary prevention programmes that have undergone scientific evaluation in UNDCP, thereby minimizing adverse effects.

Hungary, after 25 years of membership in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, is fully aware of the importance of well-balanced supply and demand reduction policies and the need for innovative approaches and adequate funding in the primary prevention field, and fully supports the leading and coordinating role of UNDCP in the world-wide action against drug abuse. We are ready to contribute our share to our common endeavours in this important area.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on Mr. Devi Prasad Ojha, Member of Parliament of Nepal.

Mr. OJHA (Nepal): The menace of drug trafficking and abuse has emerged as a major challenge confronting mankind. The illicit use of and traffic in narcotics and psychotropic substances have become a social plague afflicting both the developed and the developing countries. That humanity could be so deeply mired in the commerce of degradation and death is indeed a sobering thought.

As the criminal organizations running this trade have no respect for international frontiers, no State on its own is in a position to counter the problem. Concerted actions and cooperation at the international level are the only weapons against this scourge.

It is now commonly agreed that the one law the drug traffickers do not break is the law of supply and demand. So long as there is demand for substances and the money to pay for them, the traffickers will find a way of meeting that demand. The war against drugs will be won or lost on the ability of the international community to restrict the supply and at the same time reduce demand for narcotic drugs.

The global menace of drugs calls for a global response, and the United Nations offers the best forum for this kind of coordinated action. An effective international response would depend a great deal on close coordination and reliable funding of the multidisciplinary programme of action. What is required is more extensive cooperation between national law enforcement agencies in interdiction and narcotic intelligence.

There is also an urgent need to further strengthen incentives for the cultivation of substitute crops within the framework of a comprehensive rural development programme. Assurances of a steady market for substitute products are an essential step towards reducing the illicit production of raw materials. A global programme also cannot overlook the social and humanitarian aspects of the problem.

The adoption in 1990 by General Assembly at its seventeenth special session of the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action reflects the determination of the international community to coordinate its efforts in the fight against drugs. The declaration of the 1990s as the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse has given expression to the sense of urgency within a time-frame for action. This has led to an intensification of actions at the national and inter-State levels.

Although the problem of drugs has not reached epidemic proportions in Nepal, we have initiated a series of measures in keeping with the Global Programme of Action. At the apex is the coordination committee under the chairmanship of the Home Minister. A master plan has been formulated with the assistance of UNDCP.

Within our resource constraints, we have been giving increasing emphasis to treatment, rehabilitation and reintegration of drug offenders and abusers. Increasing attention is being given to education and public information campaigns to generate awareness among the masses. We are trying to establish a nationwide network aimed at mobilizing basic community-level forces and the private sector in the fight against drugs. There is an active campaign to interdict trafficking in illicit drugs and to counter their production. To this end, the Government's enforcement department is being steadily strengthened.

At the regional level, we are active partners with other members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in pursuing drug-control activities.

SAARC has already carried out several major programmes involving policy makers, law enforcement agencies and professionals in the field of demand reduction. We now have in our region a SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which will help us coordinate our efforts in this area at the regional level.

Over the past four decades, the United Nations has taken important steps in the fight against drugs at the international level. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, its 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 constitute a comprehensive system of international control and a framework for cooperation against trafficking.

The United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) is the single drug control programme, created by the General Assembly in 1990. Lack of adequate financial and human resources and administrative bottlenecks should not be allowed to hamper the mandate of that important Programme. The General Assembly has to ensure that the resources allocated to the Programme are commensurate with the heavy demands on it. In that context, I wish to refer to the valuable assistance provided by UNDCP in our national drug-control efforts. We also commend the quality of the workshops and expert-group meetings held under the auspices of the UNDCP within the framework of the Decade against Drug Abuse. My delegation urges greater efforts by the agencies of the United Nations system to incorporate and coordinate drug-related activities in their programmes, in keeping with the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control.

The war against drugs is one that mankind cannot lose. My delegation hopes that the review of the implementation of the Global Programme of Action at this session of the General Assembly will intensify international cooperation to end this nightmare.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on the Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, His Excellency Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun.

Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) *(interpretation from French):* The convening of high-level plenary meetings to examine the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances is a clear reflection of how seriously the international community is approaching this important question. My delegation welcomes these plenary meetings, and hopes they will give new impetus to international cooperation in this sphere.

Despite vigorous efforts by countries at the local, regional, bilateral and multilateral levels, and despite certain encouraging developments, the overall world situation with respect to drug abuse and illicit trafficking continues to deteriorate. Unfortunately, there is no sign that this alarming situation will improve in the near future. In conformity with the Declaration and the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, and with the Political Declaration and the Global Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session - all of which remain fully valid - the international community is called upon to take the necessary measures and to do everything possible to eliminate the scourge of drug abuse and illicit trafficking. It is in the interest of countries throughout the world, producers and consumers alike, to work together in this difficult struggle, for without effective, sincere cooperation, we are all doomed to be the losers. And if we all lose the battle, the big winners will be the traffickers.

The fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking is a difficult and complex undertaking. We think it must be waged in strict conformity with the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, in particular those regarding respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the inadmissibility of the threat or use of force in international relations. These are sacrosanct principles jealously defended by our peoples; they must be observed when we promote international cooperation in this sphere.

Like many other countries, the Lao People's Democratic Republic knows the disastrous consequences of drug abuse. We all understand the scope of the problem and that we must do everything to fight this scourge. Proceeding from that premise, my country took the important decision to accede to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and has participated in international conferences, seminars and forums on the problem of drug abuse, all in the hope of making our modest contribution to the efforts of the international community to eradicate this problem. We note the complexity of the 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances; it involves a number of obligations requiring thorough analysis. Serious consideration of the Convention by the competent authorities is under way in my country.

In 1990 we established a national commission for control and monitoring of drugs under the chairmanship of

a Vice-Minister. It is an independent body with the involvement of several relevant ministries; its permanent secretariat is at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Its main task is to coordinate all activities relating to drugs. It initiates programmes, plans new activities, follows up ongoing operations and collects data on production, traffic and abuse of drugs. The commission is still in its youth and needs international assistance in many areas if it is to be able to shoulder its weighty responsibilities.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is one of the South-East Asian opium-producing countries. One of our ethnic minorities, the Hmongs, has cultivated opium for generations. In order to reduce opium production the Lao Government currently has four integrated rural development projects under way. Three of these projects receive technical assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and financial contributions in the form of grants from Germany, Japan, Norway and Sweden. Just as important, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) contributes with loans on concessional terms. The fourth project is entirely financed by the United States of America. On behalf of the Lao Government and people I should like to take this opportunity to express our most sincere thanks to UNDCP, IFAD and the Governments of those friendly countries for their important assistance.

The main objective of these development projects is to offer opium producers viable alternatives on the economic, social and ecological levels. We are pleased that the results are fairly encouraging so far. A large number of Hmong villagers have voluntarily abandoned the growing of opium. These development projects have given them hope in their efforts to raise their standard of living, and many of them feel that their way of life now is much better than it has been for several generations. The report (A/48/286) of the Secretary-General on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action, recognizes that opium production in Laos has fallen considerably. Similarly, the United States State Department said in a 1993 report:

(spoke in English)

> "Laos, the world's third largest opium-producing country, is the only one of the top three to reduce its potential opium production in each of the past three years (estimated production declined 13 percent in 1992 from 1991)".

(spoke in French)

In this fight against drug abuse the Lao Government also emphasises suppression. In 1992, 77 people in possession of cannabis, heroin and opium were arrested and prosecuted under the law. In 1993, the number was 99. We intend to continue our efforts resolutely so that we can make our modest contribution to international cooperation in this area. At the regional level the Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to its cooperation with the People's Republic of China, the Kingdom of Thailand and Myanmar, with assistance from the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. The Memorandum of Understanding which we have just signed here in New York with our partners, the People's Republic of China, Thailand, Myanmar and the UNDCP, offers an important framework for effective cooperation in the future. With firm resolve and with multifaceted and sincere cooperation we hope to be able to attain our objectives.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Benin.

Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) *(interpretation from French)*: As the Secretary-General has emphasized in his message on the occasion of these two days of special debate, drug abuse and illicit trafficking in drugs have become a real scourge, which is constantly expanding.

The very large number of speakers on this subject shows the constant concern felt by the international community in the face of the disaster that drugs represent for our societies. The unanimous determination to fight such a disaster is a source of encouragement for our delegation.

In Africa the drug phenomenon, which has been steadily growing worse since the 1980s, constitutes an additional social problem for a number of countries already tormented by so many ills. Indeed, the African continent has become the very crossroads for illicit drug trafficking of all kinds because of the extremely limited material and financial resources available to our countries to fight this phenomenon.

The devastating consequences of drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in drugs are everywhere the same: increased crime, more violence, more juvenile delinquency and a worsening social situation in general. That is why the ongoing debate is particularly important to us.

Mrs. Hassan (Egypt), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meetings devoted to the matter give the international community an opportunity to reaffirm the priority it attaches to the problem of controlling narcotic drugs.

At its seventeenth special session the General Assembly adopted on 23 February 1990 resolution S-17/2, containing a Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action in which it spells out its objectives and the measures to attain them. The General Assembly also proclaimed the period 1991-2000 the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

In this connection Benin congratulates the Secretary-General on the major report he has submitted on the implementation by Member States of the Global Programme of Action, and gives its support to the recommendations in it.

It is important to note that, in pursuit of the goals of the Global Programme of Action, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) was established in 1990. It is only right to emphasize here the very positive contribution that that Programme has made at the national level as it seeks to help the developing countries in particular to build up their ability to fight drug abuse and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs.

We are happy to note that progress has already been made, particularly in West Africa, Central Africa and East Africa, in consolidating the regional cooperation that is necessary so that collectively we can cope with the scourge of drugs in Africa.

To help developing countries meet their obligations, the United Nations must give more priority to technical cooperation in monitoring, preventing and reducing drug addiction so as to eliminate the still growing illicit demand for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

We shall be able to put an end to drug abuse and the crime it causes only by prevention efforts based on information, education and action campaigns.

Member States should encourage the executive bodies of the specialized agencies of the United Nations to attach greater priority to their drug control activities. Such priority will have to be backed by allocations of additional resources to these bodies, particularly the United Nations International Drug Control Programme.

At another level, the measures aimed at controlling narcotic drugs adopted by the international community cannot be successful unless all States parties abide scrupulously by the provisions of international treaties regulating the growing, producing, manufacturing, trading and use of narcotic drugs. That is why Benin, which has already ratified the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, is taking further steps to accede to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. These international Conventions represent basic legal instruments which each country must draw upon in drafting its own national legislation.

In conclusion, I repeat that the delegation of Benin is deeply convinced that only the adoption of effective and sustained measures at the national, regional and international levels to promote the implementation of the Global Programme of Action will allow us to win the fight against drug abuse and the illicit trafficking in drugs. We hope to see our deliberations result in a strengthening of the international community's determination to wage a fierce struggle against one of the most disastrous scourges humanity has ever faced.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. MAKKAWI (Lebanon) *(interpretation from Arabic):* Drug abuse is a grave scourge that afflicts all human societies. It has had serious adverse effects on the social and economic life of large groups of people. Combating that scourge has required and continues to require concerted action by all nations and by international organizations. The United Nations has played a crucial role in the development of a global strategy against this growing menace.

Recognizing the magnitude of this threat and assuming its responsibilities towards the world community, Lebanon has spared no effort, even during the darkest days of the bloody years of the strife that devastated its territory, in trying to curb the cultivation of narcotic plants and the processing of and trafficking in illicit drugs. To this end, as this Assembly is aware, our national efforts have persisted despite our extremely limited resources, the decline of the rule of law and the weakness of governmental organs due to the general conditions that prevailed in the country. Furthermore, Lebanon has continued to be an active member of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and has maintained close and effective cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) even throughout that period.

Lebanon's geographical location - at the crossroads between the East and the West, between the centres of illicit drug-production and drug-consumption markets - has made it, on the one hand, a transit route for opium and hashish supplies exported to Europe and, on the other, a trade route for cocaine shipments originating in Latin America. In addition, the extremely difficult living conditions of Lebanese farmers and the disruption of licit

crop production and export activity for an extended period of time during the civil war, inclined some toward the cultivation of narcotic-drug plants. The lure of ready markets was too strong to resist especially in view of the virtual absence of central government authority and the weakness of local government law-enforcement agencies.

The difficult internal security situation afforded drug traffickers good opportunities for increasing their production. Thus, the land area used for cultivation of illicit narcotic plants was expanded to 16,000 hectares in 1987. In addition, manufacturing facilities were built, trafficking networks were organized and expanded and illegal seaports were developed and operated for illicit purposes.

Against this backdrop the Lebanese Government, following the re-establishment of its authority through the Taif national reconciliation pact, made it one of its top priorities to launch a firm and relentless drive against all aspects of illicit drug activity: cultivation, production, distribution and trafficking.

Over the past three years, all fields of narcotic-drug plants in the Beka'a Valley have been eradicated. In fact, the last two hectares of such plants, grown in rugged terrain, were destroyed this year. The fact that Lebanon is now totally free of such plantings is cause for celebration and a source of pride. I repeat: Lebanon today is totally free of such plantings. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Lebanese Internal Security Forces, the army and the customs service, sizeable amounts of narcotic drugs have been seized and large numbers of traffickers have been arrested. The following figures are quite illustrative: in 1990 588 kilograms of hashish were seized, along with 33 kilograms of heroin and 17 kilograms of cocaine. In addition, 372 traffickers were arrested. In 1993, on the other hand, up to 30 September, some 13,700 kilograms of hashish had been seized, along with 45 kilograms of heroin and 263 kilograms of cocaine, while 858 traffickers had been arrested.

The Drug Control Division of the Judiciary Police has been reinforced with officers and equipment, and four new branch offices have been added in major cities, despite our scarce resources. Also, all illegal seaports that were used for drug smuggling have been destroyed.

The Lebanese drug-control and law-enforcement agencies have maintained extensive and close cooperation with their counterparts in Europe and the United States. The wide scope of cooperation, which included 30 operations of controlled delivery under surveillance has yielded remarkable results. Several international smugglers and traffickers have been arrested and their clandestine operational networks dismantled. Considerable amounts of narcotic drugs have also been seized.

The Lebanese Government pursues a very stringent policy towards those who farm and traffic in drug plants. To a large extent, it has succeeded in eliminating the domestic distribution networks which constitute, as in other countries, the most formidable of the global strata of production, shipment and consumption of illicit drugs. At the same time, the Lebanese Government is in the process of enacting new legislation to stiffen punishment of those convicted of drug-related crimes. A High Inter-Ministerial Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, has been set up to develop and define the general policy parameters of combating drugs.

The international missions which recently visited Lebanon have expressed satisfaction over the efforts made by the Lebanese Government to combat illicit drugs and the effectiveness of the measures it has taken in this regard. The international observers have also verified that, as a result of the Government's policy of eliminating illicit plantings,

> "some 500,000 Lebanese civilians living in 240 villages in the north-eastern Beka'a region, who up to that point had relied on opium and hashish for their livelihoods, are now forced to seek new and alternative means of earning a living."

Lebanon has emerged from its long, painful plight with a devastated infrastructure and severely disrupted basic civil services. The Lebanese administration is seriously hampered by enormous shortages in its operational resources, with negative implications for the operational functions of the police and security apparatus, including the drug-control machinery. In sharp contrast, drug traffickers and smugglers have access to state-of-the-art technology, which they exploit in expanding their illicit activities and transactions.

Lebanon has duly sought to discharge its obligations in the area of combating the illicit cultivation, manufacture and trafficking of narcotic drugs. Therefore, it expects to receive from the Governments of friendly countries, especially those whose societies suffer from widespread drug-related problems, material and technical assistance towards the development of a substitute economy in the Lebanese areas which, for many years, have depended on narcotic drugs as a major economic and financial source of revenue. The Lebanese Government is in need of external aid for its development projects in remote areas and for the creation of substitute crops that would ensure adequate and licit livelihoods for the farmers, with a view to discouraging them from engaging in illicit cultivation. We

also hope that the United Nations and its specialized agencies will make effective contributions towards that goal.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, Mr. Giacomelli, for the interest he has shown in the needs of Lebanon. In this context, may I draw attention to the fact that Lebanon's share of the United Nations offerings in this area has been limited to a single multifaceted programme whose value did not exceed $1,129,000. We sincerely hope that future assistance to Lebanon will be commensurate with its actual and urgent needs.

The concepts of global interdependence and solidarity should unite us in our common struggle against this scourge, wherever it appears and in all its aspects. However, we feel that confronting this problem in its first stage, namely the stage of cultivation of narcotic plants, is perhaps the most cost-effective method. A "nip it in the bud" approach would be most appropriate in dealing with this scourge.

Furthermore, Lebanon is in need of assistance to establish clinical facilities and counselling programmes to treat and rehabilitate the victims of this serious social problem. In this context, Lebanon is now seeking to establish, with the cooperation of the Arab Ministers of the Interior, a pan-Arab rehabilitation centre in Lebanon to treat drug addicts from Arab and Middle Eastern countries.

Lebanon, which has traditionally played a leading role in the cultural and economic life of the entire region, continues to have the potential and fervent desire to maintain its creative and pioneering role in its immediate region and in the world at large. However, under the present circumstances, Lebanon is in need of support and assistance from friendly Governments and international organizations in order to help the Government enhance its effectiveness and carry out reconstruction and development programmes throughout the country. Our current economic and social plans focus on the development of our human resources and the revitalization of our national institutions.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on The Honourable Phandu Skelemani, Attorney-General of Botswana.

Mr. SKELEMANI (Botswana): By now, we all know that the problem of the illicit production, sale, demand and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances has been with us for a very, very long time. The nations of the world have individually, regionally and internationally tried to grapple with this problem, with varying degrees of success. There is no doubt in my mind that, in order to achieve any reasonable measure of success in the war against drug abuse and drug trafficking, greater practical international cooperation is necessary.

I am sure that by now we have all realized that, although it is necessary to bring the nations of the world together every now and then and to sign treaties, meaningful progress can be achieved only when individual States do all within their power to help each other.

The causes of illicit drug trafficking are many and varied. Poverty, greed and decadence are, in my view, some of the primary causes. It therefore appears to me that we should pay greater attention to the identification of the causes of illicit drug trafficking, because it is only when we clearly understand why our people engage in illicit drug trafficking that we can come up with solutions likely to have an impact. If there is no crop substitution for a peasant who grows as a lucrative cash crop plants from which drugs are made, what hope is there of dissuading that peasant from growing such plants?

I am aware that resolution 47/99 of 16 December 1992 calls for introspection. I also believe that the actions we take in the fight against illicit drug trafficking will invariably reflect our perception of what the root causes of the problem are. Consequently, Botswana, although it has not yet acceded to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, has taken what we consider to be the primary practical steps necessary for the implementation of that Convention, among others.

In 1990, Botswana enacted the Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters Act. As that Act states, its object is to facilitate the provision, and obtaining by Botswana, of international assistance in criminal matters. Under this Act, we are able to help other countries to obtain evidence, identify witnesses and suspects in Botswana. We can execute requests for search and seizure and confiscation of property in respect of offences. Thus we have enabled ourselves to make the necessary applications to our courts on behalf of other States or authorities. The State also has the power to send to other States persons required as witnesses, even if such persons are prisoners, as long as the usual safeguards are given by the other State.

We have also enacted the Proceeds of Serious Crime Act 1990, which also allows the State where a person has been convicted of a serious crime to apply to court for a confiscation order in respect of proceeds of that crime. A serious crime is an offence punishable by not less than two years' imprisonment. This definition does not apply in the case of the enforcement of a foreign confiscation order, which, I might add, will be enforced whatever the

minimum punishment in the other country. This Act also allows us to apply for a restraining order - *ex parte* - to ensure that the probable proceeds of serious crime are not dissipated before a trial is concluded.

The aim of those pieces of legislation is to ensure that drug traffickers, among others, do not benefit from their criminal activities. They should know that their ill-gotten gains will not be safe in Botswana, as the legal framework now exists which allows for such gains to be followed and confiscated.

Although Botswana is not a producer of any of the illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, save a small amount of marijuana - or *dagga* - we have nevertheless deemed it necessary to punish severely those who traffic in those substances. Even though as a lawyer one does not want the executive to dictate to the courts what punishment to give in any given case, we have had to provide for minimum sentences of 10 years' imprisonment for traffickers. This minimum sentence has obviously had some effect, as the number of persons caught with illicit drugs has dropped significantly.

I should also mention our 1990 Extradition Act. Such laws, we believe, are important in any international fight against drug traffickers. On the basis of reciprocity, we are willing to extradite even our nationals for trial or sentencing outside our jurisdiction. There are very few exceptions to extradition - and these are universally accepted - such as that the offence is punishable by death in the other country whereas it is not so punishable in Botswana. But the accused may still be extradited if agreement is reached that the death penalty will not be imposed.

Let me turn finally to those areas where it is not within our power to legislate or easily find an effective solution. A few of our nationals have as a result of either poverty or greed - or both - become involved in illicit trafficking in habit-forming drugs. We have tried and continue to try to accelerate rural development. We have received help from many of our friends through bilateral arrangements and, indeed, from the United Nations. A lot remains to be done and a lot can be achieved only through international cooperation.

Practical cooperation between investigating and prosecuting agencies can be improved. We have to realize that it is not much use catching only the small fish: it is the drug barons we must aim for. We need stricter legislation on both corruption and money-laundering. Banks should not simply accept unexplained huge deposits. Greater access to banking records should be possible. Indeed, people ought to be required to explain life styles beyond their known legitimate means. I am pleased to say that we in Botswana are busy preparing legislation to deal with this kind of corruption.

The success of small jurisdictions like ours will depend to a very large extent on the help we can get from the international community. Our law enforcement agencies need greater training. For example, we need police accountants to go through the accounts of suspects. We need help also to mount educational programmes against the evils of drug abuse and the corruption associated therewith. We are clearly very far from producing drug-free societies, and we probably will never be able to achieve a 100 per cent cleansing. Yet we must continue to fight with greater vigour, especially in the face of the sophisticated methods used by drug traffickers the world over.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I call next on the Director-General and Chief Executive of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency and Assistant Inspector-General of Police of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr. Bappah Jama'are Muhammad.

Mr. MUHAMMAD (Nigeria): My delegation is pleased to be participating in these high-level meetings to review the status of international cooperation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotics and psychotropic substances, especially since the adoption of a Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action at the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, held in February 1990.

The escalation of drug abuse and illicit trafficking continues to endanger the health of individuals and to threaten the very fabric of society, particularly with respect to national security, economic stability and social welfare. The Political Declaration's proclamation of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse, 1991-2000, was a recognition of the need for effective national, regional and international action to promote the Global Programme of Action.

My delegation has risen to the challenge, particularly at the national and regional levels. Our National Drug Law Enforcement Agency has been strengthened and reorganized. In that connection, six operational zones have been created; interdiction and investigation activities are coordinated from these zones. Each zone has the mandate to monitor closely the international airports, sea ports and land borders. The Agency has also established a Narcotics Communications Initiative Committee charged with the close study of the modes of operation of drug traffickers. In addition, it is hoped that its training school in Jos, Plateau state, will be upgraded by the United Nations

International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) to a regional training centre to service anglophone West African countries.

Nigeria was one of the first Member States to ratify the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. It has also entered into bilateral agreements with many countries in the areas of drug trafficking and abuse, and has prescribed stiff penalties against drug offenders. In view of my country's acknowledgement of the role of controlled delivery systems, which make for greater harmony and mutual trust between countries, Nigeria has successfully put into practice a controlled delivery system with the British Government.

My delegation acknowledges the role of the UNDCP, the International Narcotics Control Board and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in the fight against the drug scourge. The UNDCP, in particular, has played a major role in this regard since its establishment. Through its organization of seminars and workshops, and particularly through its support for the activities of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEA), the UNDCP has been playing a major role in the efforts of the international community to eradicate the drug menace. However, the UNDCP needs the resources to implement its laudable policies and programmes. We therefore hope that the international community will continue to extend much needed resources to the UNDCP.

There is also a need to complement the efforts of economically disadvantaged States by providing them with the necessary resources. In this respect we reiterate the need to give serious consideration to the sharing of proceeds confiscated from convicted drug traffickers with the States where they are domiciled. This is especially necessary where such States have materially assisted in investigations by providing a direct, timely and unimpeded flow of information leading to the arrest of the traffickers and the confiscation of the proceeds of their crime. The availability of such resources will certainly complement the efforts of the relevant drug-enforcement agencies by making them more proactive in combating the drug menace. We also call for an upward review of the present sum of $3.3 million allocated to more than 50 States in Africa for technical cooperation in drug matters, out of the total appropriation of $57.7 million.

It is the view of my delegation that to facilitate the monitoring and rapid interception of drug traffickers operational information should be readily exchanged at the appropriate levels. To achieve this, we call for the establishment and maintenance of focal points for the exchange of such information by Member States.

My delegation supports draft resolution A/48/L.12, which provides that the services of experts could be engaged by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in its policy-making role, where necessary. We believe that such an arrangement would allow for the injection of new and viable ideas into the operations of both the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the UNDCP. Because of the importance we attach to them, we also agree with the suggestion in the draft resolution that such issues be further discussed by the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council next year.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate its conviction that international cooperation is the main requirement for effectively combating the drug nightmare. The fight against drug trafficking and drug abuse also requires constant imaginative ideas to match the sophistication of drug traffickers. I am convinced that, given the constant threat of this deadly scourge, we can no longer rely on mere ineffective clichés, but must take positive action.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* The next speaker is Major-General Salahuddin Tirmizi, Director-General of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force of Pakistan, upon whom I now call.

Mr. TIRMIZI (Pakistan): It is my honour and privilege to deliver this statement on behalf of my country on this important agenda item dealing with the control of narcotic drugs.

I should like to begin by expressing my delegation's appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for his important statement on international drug control. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports under this item and for his statement, which was read out by Mr. Giorgio Giacomelli, Executive Director of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP).

My delegation is deeply alarmed by the magnitude of the escalating trends in drug abuse, the illicit trafficking, demand, production, supply and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Those activities pose a grave and persistent threat to the health and well-being of nations and a challenge to the political, economic, social and cultural structures of all societies. They affect the lives and dignity of millions of human beings, most especially young people. The proliferation of narcotic drugs not only accounts for an upsurge in crime, violence and corruption, but is a constant drain on human, financial, intellectual and other resources, thus impairing the capacity of countries in their efforts to achieve social and economic development.

The extraordinarily high level of illicit consumption, trafficking and production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances necessitates a comprehensive approach to international cooperation in drug-abuse control and counter-offensives at the international, regional and national levels. The universal concern and determination to take effective, coherent and concerted efforts against the drug problem culminated in the adoption by the General Assembly at its seventeenth special session in 1990 of the Political Declaration and Global Programme of Action. Since its creation in 1991 the UNDCP has been doing an admirable job to coordinate all United Nations drug-control activities and to implement the Programme of Action adopted at the seventeenth special session.

No strategy to control this scourge can succeed without addressing all aspects of the problem in all its manifestations. Production and supply of illicit narcotic drugs are inextricably linked to demand. Until recently the international efforts to curb the menace were rather lopsided, concentrating mainly on supply reduction. My delegation is happy to note that due recognition is now being given to the importance of reducing demand. In his message on the occasion of the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking earlier this year, the Secretary-General stated that:

> "While there must be no lessening of efforts in the other areas of drug control, the emphasis must now shift to demand reduction."

We also share the view that demand reduction should be part of a comprehensive and balanced approach to the long-term goal of eliminating drug abuse.

The Government of Pakistan attaches high priority to the eradication of the drug menace from the country. Our efforts are aimed at various aspects of the problem, particularly supply-reduction programmes and curbs on illicit drug trafficking. Those initiatives include programmes for the eradication of the production of narcotic substances, the elimination of processing and trafficking, the treatment and rehabilitation of addicts and community intervention on drug abuse.

A number of important administrative and legislative measures have been taken in the recent past to control the problem. These include the establishment of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force, which, like the existing agencies directly involved in drug control, investigates cases of drug trafficking and prosecutes the criminal under the law. The Anti-Narcotics Task Force Ordinance empowers the Force to search, investigate and arrest those involved in the drug trade. In order to deal quickly with crimes related to drugs, such cases are being referred to special courts for speedy trials.

In December 1991, the Government of Pakistan promulgated an Ordinance amending the relevant law to provide for the destruction of seized narcotics. As a result, huge quantities of seized narcotics have since been destroyed. In September this year, the Dangerous Drug Act of 1930 was amended to the effect that courts may order forfeiture of the assets of a person sentenced to imprisonment for a term of two years or more. The previous law provided for such a forfeiture if an accused was sentenced to life imprisonment. Also in September, relevant provisions of law have been amended to include the death penalty in case of certain serious offences relating to drug trafficking. Also, through a Presidential Ordinance, legal lacunae regarding the definition of opium have been removed from the relevant laws.

Pakistan has made significant progress in curbing the production of narcotics. Since the crop season of 1978-79, the acreage under poppy cultivation has been reduced from 80,500 acres to about 15,000 acres in 1992-93. The production of opium has been reduced from 800 tons in 1978-79 to about 150 tons in 1992-93. This has been possible through the implementation of a variety of crop-substitution and area-development schemes and the provision of economic incentives and alternate means of income to the traditional poppy growers. The Government has also undertaken infrastructural development projects by building new roads, schools and irrigation channels to ensure socio-economic development in such areas.

As a result of intensified interdiction measures, the law enforcement agencies seized 3,378 kilograms of opium, 3,129 kilograms of heroin and over 160,000 kilograms of hashish during the first 8 months of this year. Our law enforcement agencies are also maintaining a close liaison with their counterparts in other countries as well as with INTERPOL in order to exchange information about drug traffickers and to take legal action against them.

Together with preventive measures through effective and rigorous law enforcement, education provides the possibility of keeping people away from drugs. In Pakistan, a programme is under implementation to educate the masses and the target groups about the ill effects of drug abuse. Attention is also being given to training persons in the field of prevention throughout the country so that they in turn will train community workers.

Governments and intergovernmental organizations alone cannot resolve this problem. Therefore, every effort is being made to utilize available resources at the local level among families, teachers, social workers, religious

leaders and health-care workers and to mobilize non-governmental organizations to combat this scourge.

In the regional context, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is pursuing drug control activities through a technical committee on the prevention of drug trafficking and drug abuse. Between 1988 and 1992, this committee carried out 20 major subregional programmes involving key policymakers and other professionals in the field of law enforcement and demand reduction. Pakistan is a party to the SAARC Convention on narcotic drugs. Similarly, the 10-member Economic Cooperation Organization has also established anti-narcotics committees, thus providing another important regional framework for cooperation in combating drug trafficking.

The Global Programme of Action focuses on several areas of cooperation in the multilateral context. These include the increased involvement of specialized agencies, other United Nations bodies and international financial institutions in prevention activities and alternative-development and crop-substitution programmes. Significantly, the International Monetary Fund has singled out the drug problem as one of five global priorities. In developing countries, drug trafficking is linked to poverty. The programmes of international financial institutions relating to poverty eradication therefore have great bearing on eliminating the drug menace. It is important that international financial institutions provide generous assistance to developing countries, especially those that have launched a crusade against illicit drugs.

My delegation also accords high priority to the need for allocating the necessary financial, personnel and other resources for drug control activities within the United Nations system. It is therefore essential to provide a greater amount of resources to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme both through the regular budget and through voluntary extrabudgetary contributions in order to enable it to respond effectively to the needs and requirements of developing countries in combating the drug problem.

In the context of economic assistance, we believe that priority should be given to farmers in the poppy-growing areas and that industrial units should be established to generate alternative income sources and employment opportunities. The cultivators of substitute crops must also get better access for their products in the international markets. Here, international cooperation assumes fundamental importance. Furthermore, law enforcement agencies involved in drug control programmes in developing countries are in need of modern equipment to enhance their professional skills and effectiveness. The developed countries can play an important role in the provision of such equipment, meeting high operational costs and training the personnel of the enforcement agencies.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the scourge of drug abuse can only be tackled by effective international cooperation. A clear strategy is in place in the resolutions and decisions of the seventeenth special session. Let us renew our resolve to make the Global Programme of Action a success by concerted action on the international, regional and national levels. For its part, Pakistan remains resolutely committed to taking all possible actions to eliminate and eradicate the narcotics problems. In this context, it is pertinent to bring to the notice of the Assembly that the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, in her first cabinet meeting held yesterday, identified the eradication of the narcotic drug problem as one of the six priority areas of her Government.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I call on Mr. Jean-Marie Kacon Gervais, Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire) *(interpretation from French):* Over the past two decades and especially since 1980, the abuse and illicit trafficking of drugs have grown at a frightening pace, sparing no national borders and without regard to the socio-economic development of countries around the globe. Hence, this phenomenon has not bypassed Africa any more than it has bypassed any other continent.

Already weakened by an unprecedented economic crisis, and without having been forearmed, our countries have found themselves in the grip of a complex criminal and drug problem with all the social consequences it entails. We had to start from scratch in learning about this new threat, which is bound to the no-less delicate question of underdevelopment.

We had to learn very quickly that eliminating this global scourge required steadfast political will and fortitude in mobilizing major human and material resources on the national, regional and international levels. With that awareness, most African Governments have shown their political will by acceding to international legal instruments relating to the fight against drug abuse and illegal trafficking in narcotics and psychotropic substances. They have likewise made praiseworthy endeavours to try to stop the growth in, or even diminish trafficking in and consumption of, drugs. Despite their modest means, they continue today to confront the threat.

Yet all these efforts seem not to have borne fruit. The dimensions and complexity of the phenomenon exceed all predictions, and the rudimentary means available to our States are far from being able to respond to a global problem. Though not the main victim, Africa today seems to have become integrated into this vast illegal enterprise as a fulcrum of activity.

How did this come about? Why this explosion of drug trafficking and narcotics use in our countries? The causes are many, but relate principally to Africa's current socio-economic situation, which is illustrated by several factors.

The first is poverty. The continuing impoverishment of Africans is a major factor in the increased trafficking in and production and abuse of drugs.

Secondly, the low prices of our export products make our peasants turn, under the influence of traffickers, to clandestine cultivation of cannabis or to other kinds of unorthodox agricultural enterprises; the profits may be illegal, but they are far greater than those generated by traditional crops. It is true that we have not yet reached that point, but persistent low export prices and the ongoing impoverishment of the rural masses make us fear that we shall.

Thirdly, the economic crisis, with its attendant marginalization, layoffs, unemployment and school-leaving, encourages drug abuse, previously unknown in sub-Saharan Africa but now on its way to becoming a way for people to forget their harsh living conditions.

Fourthly, civil war, famine, natural disaster and drought with their attendant poverty, violence, corruption and community destabilization also encourage the spread of drugs in our countries, at least in terms of their production and sale as substitute resources.

Fifthly, our borders are porous, owing to insufficient trained customs and police personnel and to a lack of funding for surveillance and control. Before we knew it, Africa gradually was becoming a favourite site for traffickers: a transit area without major risks for contraband from many sources. Statistics show that the quantity of hard drugs seized in Africa in 1991 was six times that reported in 1990. This is exponential growth. How can we fail to be aghast?

Obviously, Africa alone cannot allocate the considerable resources needed for an effective fight against a phenomenon of these dimensions. International cooperation is indispensable if we are to dismantle the networks in our capitals, which have become drug-transit strongholds.

In that connection, I cannot fail to pay a well-deserved tribute to the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), whose sustained assistance to our Governments is helping us strengthen our machinery in the fight against drugs. There is no need here to speak of UNDCP's crucial role in its sphere of activity. Faced with the complexity and seriousness of drug-related questions, it coordinates activities to avoid wasted effort and useless outlays. It redounds to the Secretary-General's honour that he conceived of coordinating anti-drug activities through a more rational allocation of responsibilities.

We are pleased that the UNDCP regional office organized a seminar, held from 15 to 19 March 1993 at Abidjan, for foreign-affairs officials of States members of the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of Central African States, to inform and train them on the drug problem. The participants, from 27 countries members of those subregional economic-integration organizations, recommended measures aimed at: ratification by all States of the Conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 and harmonization of their national legislation to strengthen the anti-drug struggle; further building of subregional and regional cooperation through the establishment of a subregional and regional anti-drug structure; further intensification of international cooperation; provision of basic and advanced training for officials responsible for the prevention, repression, treatment and social reintegration of addicts; bolstering of measures against laundering drug money; and recognition of the need to increase assistance to Africa, the most vulnerable of the continents. They also recommended UNDCP assistance in the areas of prevention, repression and social reintegration. Those recommendations were ratified at the Cairo summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which declared the anti-drug struggle to be a high priority for African States.

Turning to my own country, Côte d'Ivoire, I need hardly remind members that we were the first in Africa to establish a ministry for the anti-drug struggle; this reflected our keen awareness of the dangers of the drug phenomenon. Had it not been for the deep economic crisis we are facing, that department would have continued to exist and to coordinate our efforts in the fight against the production, sale and use of narcotics. None the less, my Government remains convinced of the soundness of current programmes, which are coordinated by an interministerial committee for the anti-drug struggle.

But alas, faced with the size of the job, our needs are immense and our available means are modest indeed. In

order to eradicate this phenomenon, we will require the means to inform and sensitize our peoples on the real danger of drugs. In order to put an end to the production of drugs, other sources of income must be found or our traditional cash crops must be made profitable enough to discourage unlawful agricultural speculations involving drugs and psychotropic products.

In an excellent report produced by the United Nations Secretariat, mention is made, in substance, of the fact that drug-produced revenues are at the very heart of the economies in crisis. It must thus be feared that our rural populations, discouraged by excessively low prices for production and export, will only exacerbate this danger. Any positive result in the fight against drugs must depend on our economic growth. Only by promoting development will it be possible to put an end to this phenomenon, spawned by poverty and the impoverishment of rural and urban masses.

From this perspective, the eradication of poverty would appear to be one of the first measures to be taken. At the same time, the international community should agree to mobilize substantial funding to enable the UNDCP to dispose of the means without which the Programme cannot hope to attain its objectives.

Moreover, the frozen assets of drug traffickers should serve to strengthen cooperation, not only on the bilateral level between consumer and producer countries, as has been the case until now, but also among transit countries such as our own. It is from the need to eliminate this scourge that the notion of shared responsibility invoked by General Assembly resolution 47/102 takes its full meaning.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now recognize Colonel Saleh Mohammed Al-Sheikh, Assistant Under-Secretary of the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior in charge of humanitarian affairs.

Mr. AL-SHEIKH (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): The narcotic trade is expanding on an international scale. Therefore the competent agencies engaged in combating drugs are intent upon alerting the world to the threat posed by the unprecedented spread of that trade. The prices of certain drugs, such as heroin, have actually dropped in some regions due to availability and excess supply, yet the profits realized are abundant and vary from place to place, on the long road from the producing countries to the distribution and consumption areas.

Drugs are smuggled by the most effective methods of camouflage, sometimes by resorting to bribery and the temptation of material gain and, if the need arises, by force and coercion. Consequently, it has become much more difficult to combat the international drug trade in general, especially now, in view of the increasing tendency of traffickers to launder their ill-gotten gains through the collusion of networks of middlemen. Some countries and financial centres are now known to be places where money laundering operations are carried out without difficulty or hindrance. The task of drug combating agencies, therefore, has become much more difficult and complex. Drug trafficking is no longer the trade of small-time pushers; it has become big business and the preserve of huge international and regional cartels which use the most modern methods of smuggling, distribution and money laundering. Some studies indicate that the financial returns of the drug trade have outstripped by far the revenues of the petroleum trade in its entirety.

It is no wonder then that the drug problem has become the source of serious concern for the international community as a whole because of its dangerous effects and the medical, security and economic problems it causes. It is a scourge that threatens the very existence of humanity and could lead to the disintegration of the family and the disruption of any country's social fabric. We in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia consider the danger posed by drugs to be more lethal than the most destructive weapons of modern warfare.

The Kingdom, having witnessed the vast and dangerous spread of drugs in many countries, did not wait for this lethal scourge to attack it. Saudi Arabia has taken all possible steps and precautions to prevent an internal drug problem from arising. The Kingdom continues to deploy all possible efforts at every local, regional and international level. It has signed international agreements to fight the spread of narcotics and psychotropic substances; it has enacted legislation to combat the smugglers and pushers of these poisons; and it has encouraged bilateral agreements and signed quite a number of them.

Drug combating efforts will not succeed except through total and close cooperation and coordination between all the agencies and authorities involved in drug combating activities in every country. Such cooperative efforts have successfully forestalled many attempts to smuggle drugs. The war against drugs and the criminal organizations which traffic in them will not be effective without joint action by all concerned parties. That is why the Arab countries, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have agreed on concerted strategies to ensure cooperation in the war against drugs by sharing information in order to forestall attempts to smuggle drugs into any Arab territory.

The 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances calls on the parties to the Convention to enact laws in conformity with its provisions. The Convention represents the most effective means of combating the drug trade through the revitalization of international cooperation and mutual assistance, and by seeking the means of preventing drug smugglers from reaping the benefits of their illicit activities. It encourages the enactment of legislation to criminalize money laundering, and aims at preventing international borders from becoming barriers that hinder efforts to bring offenders to justice, since drug trafficking recognizes no boundaries.

In response to the Convention, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has entered, through its competent authorities, into agreements for the extradition of criminals and the exchange of legal assistance, criminalized money laundering operations, and prepared a new anti-drug law, now in the final stages of formulation, which conforms to the 1988 Convention. The Government of Saudi Arabia will thus be enacting the most modern laws in the fight against the drug trade.

The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia wishes to remind the distinguished delegates that in addition to the aforementioned steps taken to prevent the spread of drugs, we must concentrate on the local priorities such as informing the public on the moral, medical, social and economic dangers of drug abuse; enacting stringent laws against drug traffickers; making treatment available to the victims of the drug trade; and setting up effective anti-drug agencies equipped with the latest technologies.

I wish to reaffirm that Saudi Arabia resolutely supports every international effort to combat the drug trade through cooperation and constructive dialogue founded on a deep respect for the experiences of States and peoples and their particular cultural heritage.

Saudi Arabia's interest in supporting the United Nations programmes and the international cooperation mechanism does not stem from the scope of this scourge in the Kingdom, but rather from a sense of international responsibility, on the one hand, and from our conviction, on the other, that drug trafficking does not recognize international borders. Our reading of the direction the drug trade is taking, on the international level, in the 1990s gives us cause for concern because of its expanding scope and the increasing sophistication of its methods. Such a situation presents the international community with major challenges at a time when it is striving to promote ethical behaviour and to fight drug pushers by every possible means.

Our Government views with satisfaction the international efforts now being deployed with a view to strengthening cooperation in the area of security at the regional and international levels. Saudi Arabia particularly appreciates the efforts of the United Nations and its Member States to create the appropriate climate for strengthening international efforts in the area of combating drugs.

I should like to emphasize the need to formulate a comprehensive strategy that would combine theory and practice as well as prevention and enforcement. To achieve such an objective, we have to cooperate as States, agencies and organizations toward the creation of a world community that would be able to live in security, safety and prosperity.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on His Excellency Mohammed Taryam, the Director General of Security Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior in the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. TARYAM (United Arab Emirates) *(interpretation from Arabic):* At the outset, I should like to pay tribute to the tireless efforts and the constructive contributions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. I would like to reaffirm our commitment to carrying out the functions and tasks contained in the Global Programme of Action on international cooperation against drugs, in the context of the United Nations Decade against Drug Abuse.

The problem of drugs is undoubtedly one of the most important and pressing issues that affect the security and the very future of mankind, given its grave consequences. In addition to its local aspect, it is a global problem, because it impacts the economic, social, political and security conditions of most countries of the world. We are convinced that this problem cannot be effectively addressed at the local level alone or by local thinking alone. The problem of drug abuse is not confined within the national borders of any one country, but transcends those borders and impacts other countries. Herein lies the global aspect of the problem. We cannot claim or delude ourselves that there is one single country on this planet that could consider itself to be immune to the pernicious evils of drugs that endanger mankind as a whole and whose gravity is exacerbated from one year to the next.

The development of new kinds of drugs and the continued efforts by drug traffickers to promote these new drugs throughout the world despite international efforts to combat their endeavours have combined in making the problem more complex and intractable.

Mankind has made enormous progress since the conclusion of the first Convention on drugs in Shanghai in 1908. Since then many international conventions and protocols have been concluded in an attempt to realize the aspirations of the world community after a formula whereby the problems of supply, demand and trafficking of illicit drugs may be brought under control. So far we have 15 such conventions and protocols. Most important are the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. All of these instruments represent resolute international efforts over a long period of time to rationalize world action and strategy at the national, regional and international levels against the illicit use of drugs.

The United Arab Emirates has developed a local strategy based on the global strategies developed by international and regional organizations and on the Arab strategy developed by the Pan-Arab Bureau for Drug Control. In deference to the international conventions in this regard to which my country is a party, we try to harmonize our local conditions accordingly. Competent authorities in the United Arab Emirates try to harmonize our national legislation on combating drugs with the provisions of those conventions. We are also drafting a law on the laundering of proceeds from crime with particular emphasis on drug-related crimes.

Our strategy focuses on the reduction of demand and the prevention of drug use by developing an approach that takes into account the need for increasing awareness, treatment, rehabilitation side by side with law enforcement measures. This is supervised and followed up by a higher national committee against drugs whose efforts are directed towards prevention of the entry of these toxic substances into our country. Regional and international cooperation and exchange of information are essential in this respect.

In promotion of international action, we continue to work with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, the International Narcotics Control Board, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs of the Economic and Social Council, and the narcotics branch and other international organizations and organs. The diffusion and exchange of information as well as participation in seminars and training programmes offered by these organs are of vital importance.

The United Arab Emirates hosted on 3 October 1992 the World Conference of Experts in Drug Control. Thirty-one States and nine international organizations participated in that Conference which, at the conclusion of its work, made comprehensive and important recommendations calling for consolidation of all efforts by States and for cooperation by international organizations in confronting this menace which endangers all mankind by exchanging information and expertise and by organizing local, regional and international meetings. While there is good faith in promoting international cooperation to confront these problems, we call for an expansion of this cooperation on the basis of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. This Convention provides a good legal basis for such cooperation. In this context, we urge those countries that have not acceded to and/or ratified that Convention to do so without delay. We also call for training programmes under the United Nations International Drug Control Programme to be stepped up in both quantity and quality, especially with regard to the training of police and customs agents who are in charge of law enforcement in combating drugs. Beneficiary countries should contribute their own inputs and their assessment to such programmes so that they may continue to be improved.

With regard to the question of paying compensation to farmers in the producing countries and the development of substitute crops, my country supports the recommendations of international conferences on combating drugs.

We feel that the United Nations, with its specialized agencies, is the world body most qualified to implement those recommendations and translate them into realities in order to promote international cooperation in the area of substitutive rural development, and put an end to the dangers to the environment that arise from illicit cultivation. In order to avoid economic and social dislocation in the producing countries, the international community should provide technical, economic and financial assistance to those countries with a view to promoting substitutive development, while combating trafficking across the transit countries and diminishing the capability to satisfy the demand for drugs in the consuming countries. My delegation also calls for stringent measures in the area of monitoring the returns of drug trafficking and for the international criminalization of the practice of money laundering.

Combating the abuse of and trafficking in drugs is part and parcel of the need to comprehensively address the economic and social problems that beset the countries of the world in a manner that would enable those countries to achieve sustainable development and political stability. It is self-evident that the political upheavals, situations of economic recession and the natural disasters that afflict

many countries have very serious consequences that tend to augment the numbers of those who take refuge from adversity by giving in to the temptation of drug abuse and addiction.

In conclusion, I should like to reaffirm that combating drugs is not merely a national or regional question, but also an international issue that must be addressed in the interests of all mankind.

The PRESIDENT *(interpretation from Arabic):* I now call on Dr. Isaac Barreto Ribeiro, President of the Federal Drug Council of Brazil.

Mr. BARRETO RIBEIRO (Brazil) *(interpretation from Spanish):* The subject of drugs belongs to a class of problems about which two things can be said with certainty. The first is that we recognize the global scope of the problem. The second is that we are aware that any proposed solutions require broad international cooperation.

For this reason, both the clear political will of States, as shown by the implementation of international agreements, and the effective implementation, by common accord, of measures to deal with the problem might seem to give us sufficient reason to imagine a future in which drugs, although still a cause for concern, would no longer be a serious threat to the very survival of society.

Yet it is rather surprising that recent reports on the problem give the impression that, despite all that has been done, the drug situation is in many respects the same as it was some years ago. That is certainly not because of inertia or lack of action.

The drugs division of the Federal Police, in trying to stamp out drugs, is currently carrying out 11 programmes.

First, there is the cannabis eradication programme. In 1992 more than 2 million cannabis plants were uprooted. The same year about 19.5 tons of consumption-ready cannabis were confiscated. This year we have already uprooted more than 2.1 million cannabis plants. Rural farmland used for illegal planting can be confiscated and returned to the State.

Second, there is the programme to eradicate *epadú*, also known as Brazilian coca. As a result of the activities of the Federal Police, the amount of land used to cultivate *epadú* is diminishing year by year.

Third, we have a programme to combat organized crime. This involves exchanging information on drug traffickers between various specialized agencies that deal with combating drugs.

Fourth, we have a programme to combat the cartels. As proof of the success of this programme, the Federal Police have been able to prevent almost 7,000 tons of cocaine from coming onto the consumer market.

Fifth, there is a programme to control precursor chemicals and derivatives used in manufacturing drugs. Using computers, we have been able to achieve better control over the flow of substances under international control.

Sixth, we have a programme employing trained sniffer dogs to interdict illicit drugs.

Seventh, we are running a programme of symposiums to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs.

Eighth, there is a programme to monitor our rivers and coasts.

Ninth, we have a programme to intercept radio communications in the Amazon region.

Tenth, we have a programme to interdict drugs in our ports and airports.

Eleventh, we have a computerization programme so that we can set up a data bank.

These are the main activities currently being carried out by the Federal Police in trying to stamp out illicit drugs.

In the area of prevention and rehabilitation, the Federal Narcotics Council, the central body responsible for national drug policy in Brazil, has approved a national drug plan, whose guidelines include systemizing the available information on the drug situation, training drug prevention agents, mobilizing the community and improving the relevant legislation.

In order to achieve the goals of our national drug policy, we have identified the following strategies: first, development of an epidemiological census so that we can view the problem from all aspects in as much detail as possible; secondly, setting up a national system of prevention; thirdly, together with the press, the carrying out of consciousness-raising and prevention campaigns; fourthly, training experts in drug prevention; fifthly trying to raise communities' awareness so that they will support campaigns to prevent and treat drug abuse and to rehabilitate addicts; sixthly use of the education system as the primary prevention mechanism; and, seventhly, adapting the basic health care system to treat drug users.

Brazil has always tried to contribute to the international cooperative effort to combat drugs. Similarly, it has always tried to increase the means available to meet this challenge on the domestic front.

Since taking office President Itamar Franco has impressed on the Government the importance of respecting ethical principles. The fight against drugs must be a fight for ethics, waged ethically. It must also be a struggle that does not lose sight of the principles of law and, above all, respect for human rights.

The meeting rose at 8 p.m.